

From the Editor

We have now stepped on the fifth number of issues overcoming a lot of obstructions on the way. There is but one hope before us that is we have to overcome more—more obstructions to be set aside, maybe they will cost more hurdle. However, we have been successful to publish a number good research articles, poems and reviews. Thanks to Pratiti Shirin, Assistant Professor of Dhaka University, Bangladesh for contributing in this issue with a review on Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* and to Pritika Gupta, an undergraduate student at Ashoka University, Haryana for writing an excellent article on Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. Though a novice to write an article maintaining MLA style or so, Pritika Gupta is very promising. We have published several poems with splendid thoughts and way of expressions. And thanks to all the members of the Editorial Board who reviewed, scrutinised and edited all these submissions.

Editor

An Introspection on the Folklore of Bharmani:

The Patron Goddess of the Gaddi Tribe

Neeraj Sharma

Abstract

This paper is an introspection on the folklore of Bharmani, the patron goddess of the Gaddi tribe. The article throws light on the nature of dichotomy of faith and belief of this tribe. The article is about the local deity Bharmani and her strife with Shiva, the trident bearer. Thus giving way to an entirely new dynamics of folklore where through compromise two different faiths flourished. The tales apart from being political and subversive suggest an alternative way to coexist in harmony. The present Manimahesh Yatra of Bharmour, Chamba suggest a synthesis of two opposing myths. It also offers a prolific example of a settlement and understanding. The article also brings to light the need to visit and question such existences of confluences. This is also an effort to study an otherwise religious debate from an academic perspective. The Gaddi folkloristic space is dynamic and has scopes of multiple readings.

Keywords: Gaddi, folklore, coexistence, compromise

The Gaddis are a semi nomadic tribe of Himachal Pradesh. They are the inhabitants of the upper basin of the Ravi River. Bharmour, a *Tehsil* under Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh, is the seat of Gaddi life. The historical, cultural and social scenario of Bharmaur presents a unique amalgamation of faiths, beliefs, rituals and practices of the people coming and settling in Bharmaur from different directions. The history of the place is also included in the folk stories of Gaddi people. Gaddi is an open term for the members of the tribal group,

which belongs to the Gaddheran area. There is a strictly knitted caste system among Gaddis based on the pan Indian Hindu caste system. The term Gaddi is applied to everyone who belongs to the tribe and not to a particular community, caste or clan.

Different theories are laid down about these wandering people coming and settling at Bharmaur. There is a popular saying among Gaddis about their arrival at Bharmaur, “*Ujdeya Lahore, te baseya Bharmaur*”, meaning Bharmaur was populated after Lahore was deserted. Scholars, of course have alternate interpretations. The emphasis of this paper is more on the rich folkloristic heritage of the Gaddis and not their historicity.

Gaddis have immense treasure of literature in terms of Orality. The oral universe of the Gaddi tribe can be understood through various forms of Orality and tale telling, which is the per-formative part of folklore. The mythology of the Gaddi folklore ranges into many categories. They have preserved and held on to their age-old methods of living life which is full of songs, stories, anecdotes, riddles, and intimate knowledge about the flora and fauna. This traditional knowledge which also serves as the collective cultural wisdom and knowledge of the Gaddi tribe are mainly passed on to generations through the medium of oral telling and retellings. In the Gaddi cultural space, elders whether male or female of the family would narrate stories to young children of the family or exchange riddles, making them familiar with the sensibilities and ethos of the social group.

The oral folkloric literature of the Gaddi people has a rich heritage which caters to varied sub genres. The general enquiries would, most of the times, be religious and ethical in purpose and have a good deal of didacticism at the end. The range of the subjects also varies from the socio-cultural to the metaphysical, where gods come and dance with the common folk. On a generic level the Gaddis folklore can be sub-divided as under

1. *Ainchali*, religious folk narratives of major pan narratives
2. Religious narratives and stories of various residing village deities.

3. Children's stories and songs, beast fables, forest stories and anecdotes related to childbirth.
4. Stories of magic and supernatural entities, of forest dwellers and strange animals.
5. Songs of women dealing with life and death --- celebratory, advisory and melancholic.
6. Songs on popular subjects, which range from the enquiries on daily life to philosophical ones.

The above division reveals that the religious folklore of the Gaddis have a dual nature of existence—Ainchali and the local narratives. Ainchali is made up of three different narratives. They are the *Sabeen*, *Pandaveen* and *Rameen* which are the Gaddi narratives of the *Shiv Puran*, *The Mahabharata* and *The Ramayana*. The local narratives are many and varied but one stands out more than others – the narrative of goddess Bharmani. She is considered to be the guardian of the Gaddis and has lent her name to the most important place of Gaddi culture, Bharmour. The earliest reference of a great religious upheaval in this area has been dated back in the sixth and seventh century, when King Maru came to Bharmaur and established a pan Indian religious system, abolishing the pre-existing maze of local village and forest Gods and Goddesses.

This paper will explore the myths and narratives of local deities and throw light on the displacement that happened many years ago when a major religion takes up residence in an otherwise peripheral space. As Niel Phillip says:

A myth is first and foremost a story. But it is a story that encodes the values, beliefs and dreams of a people, so each myth arises from a particular cultural context. The sacred qualities of the myths are central to the meaning of each story. Often myths may be told by certain individuals, or at certain times of the

year, or during certain ceremonies. To re-tell or re-enact a myth is to step out of this world and into the myth world. (8-9)

By myth world I would like to refer to that world unseen but felt, the forces behind our every move, the reason behind the animation of our world. Myths are then the bridges that help us cross this vast universe of the unseen, they are the key to this negotiation between the two worlds.

Bharmaur, the land etched in the lofty Himalayas have a strong tradition of mythical folklores. The people have still not lost touch with their old beliefs passed down through generations. They have a story for all occasions and an explanation for every mystery of life. In Bharmaur there is a dichotomy of sorts so far as their folk legends are concerned. While they revere their patron Goddess Bharmani Mata and other minor native hill Gods and Goddesses, they equally worship their God Shiva, who they believe is their guide and protector. These hill people attribute their sustenance to Bharmani Mata and their existence to Lord Shiva.

Bharmani is the patron goddess of Bharmour. There is not much evidence, written or recorded related to the goddess. But as folklore suggests she is the chief goddess of Bharmour, benign and gentle and very rarely agitated. There is a logical reason for her being the patron goddess of Bharmour by her association with water. Some scholars associate her with the forest and call her a Van-Devi¹. But there is an equally strong parallel school of thought that associates her with the rest of the pan Indian gods. The Gaddis associate Bharmani with life giving water. The spring of Bharmani is the only source of natural drinking water and it covers the area of about thirty villages from Bharmour to Khani village, some ten kilometers downhill.

¹ Forest dwelling goddess

In the present context the dwelling place of Bharmani is in a beautiful and open grassland with an adjoining fur grove called Dugha Sahr. The present priest of Bharmani who live in Bari village, a village that lies near Bharmour, says that in *Satya Yug*² when there were face-to-face conversations between the divine and the mortal, Bharmani lived in the midst of Chaurasi. Her *Chinha*,³ a trident still exists in an open area in front of the Lakshana Devi temple. The story goes that once when Bahrmani was not in residence, Lord Shiva on his way to Manimahesh arrived there in the evening and settled there for the night. It was open grassland surrounded by high cedar trees. The beauty of the place at once won the heart of Shiva who was travelling with his 84 *ganas*⁴. By chance Bharmani came back that very evening and was infuriated at the sight of Shiva and his ganas. She at once asked Shiva to vacate the place. The lord pacified her and sang praises in her honour along with his Ganas. At this she allowed Shiva to stay for the night and herself went to Duga Sahr⁵. The next morning when she came back, she was greeted by a different scenario. The whole place was deserted and she could see various lingams erected all over Chaurasi. The great mother was in a terrible rage to see those half lit *Dhunas*⁶ of the Ganas and the obvious lack of care with which her abode had been used. Mad with anger she summoned Siva. Shiva began to realise he was facing no meek force and so he began pacifying Her. He said in the age of Kali (*Kali-Yuga*) there will be a pilgrimage to mount Kailash in the month of Shravan⁷. Devotees from all direction will come for the holy pilgrimage and if his wish is sincere, Siva will fulfill it. The god declared that this sacred trip will be rendered incomplete unless they begin it by

² It means the age of truth. According to Hindu philosophy there are four ages – Satya yug or the age of truth, Treta yug or the third age (chronologically this age came after the satya yug), Dwapur Yug or the second age and Kali yug or the last age. According to the Hindu mythology the universe will exhaust to Armageddon at the end of Kaliyuga, giving way to a new universal order..

³ The sacred relic.

⁴ The followers of Siva. In the gaddi belief Siva has a huge army of gana. As Siva is the king of dhauladhar mountains

⁵ A deep meadow in Gaddi vernacular dialect.

⁶ Bonfires made by ascetics.

⁷ The season of the rains, usually falls between July-August.

getting the blessings of Bharmani, the mother of the universe. Pleased with this the goddess went away to her resting place in the forest.

There is another reason for Bharmani being worshiped as the patron goddess of Bharmaur and the surrounding villages. Her association with water, from ancient times points towards the benevolent nature of the goddess who slayed demons by sprinkling water from her Kamandalu. Bharmani Devi is famous for giving rains and water, which springs from her feet at Dugha Sahr. The water is further channelized to almost thirty villages in the Budhil⁸ valley. The control of life giving water in the region elevated Bharmani to the status of the most revered deity in the region. Her role in the local society is thus like the early kings who controlled water for the regulation of their states and to prove their authority over the subjects. Mahesh Sharma writes:

The control of water was necessary for the regulation of the early state, particularly in the terrain where the water table was low. Therefore its economic significance -- for irrigation, communication, drinking, running water mills, etc. gets magnified in the ritual domain as well. As was the early Brahmanic custom in the subcontinent, water from all sources of the state was necessary for the consecration of the king. In a way the ritual subsumed all identities to fashion the state; the king being the protector of all the people within its domain. (47)

Further enriching the water tale, the local people have another story about the water which Bharmani Mata stole from the spring of Sandhola, a Naga deity⁹. Sandhola Naga's abode is on the other side of the same mountain where Bharmaur is located. According to the local legend, once Bharmani Mata along with her sister Jakhni Mata who is the patron goddess of Gareema village, went together to steal water from Sandhola's spring. The Naga

⁸ The name of a tributary river of Ravi.

⁹ A deity of the serpent genealogy.

was sleeping when the two sisters entered his domain and filled their pots with water. As they were returning back the snake god awoke and chased the sisters with a bow and arrow in his hands. When they reached at the ridge of the mountain, Bharmani threw her vessel down the slope which landed at Dugha Sahr. The other goddess Jakhni Mata had a long way to go as her village was far from the ridge of Kukdu. Therefore Jakhni Mata was hit by Sandhola's arrow in the leg and her water pot fell from her hands and fell at Badei village and thus formed a spring there. Later, a temple of Jakhni Mata was erected there and the deity was known as Latti Jakhan¹⁰. The priest of Jakhni Mata, until these days dance on his one foot at occasions whenever the deity is invoked.

There are many other local legends about Bharmani Devi which gives her the status of the reigning deity of Bharmaur. Her appearance in the local folktales provides her with a rank of a guardian and the protector. As the goddess is worshipped as the fertility goddess, devotees go to her temple to ask for children, especially boys. So it would be right to say that people seek her blessings for the growth and sustenance of their family, clan or race.

Thus the historical belief that classical tradition displaces the local or lesser known traditions can be challenged. For in the case of Gaddi folkloristic space a fusion of traditions can be seen. No tradition can fully exist and thrive without the aid of some other traditions. The dismantling of the devi cult of Bharmani by Shiva's brigade not only suggests the fusion of two separate myths but paves a way to a new folklore with an entirely different dynamics that incorporates the undercurrents of coexistence. This synthesis can be assessed in terms of the sacrificial offerings towards these deities. While Shiva, the proclaimed God of the Gaddis gets one sacrifice per devotee in a lifetime, Bharmani and the other local deities, on the other hand, have no such limitations. They are in fact the local go-to gods and goddesses. The

¹⁰ Lame in Gaddi dialect.

relationship of the Gaddi with his Bharmani is more natural and less formal in contrast to the more rigid one with Shiva.

Hence the affiliation and association reflect an ancient power play suggesting force, deceit and compromise thus rendering an entirely new understanding to the Gaddis, who still try to strike a balance between the two.

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Ovid's Bacchus: A Study in Gender Fluidity

Angshuman Mukhopadhyay

Abstract

In the history of literary and pictorial art, the depiction of Bacchus has always had a feminine streak. Ovid's portrayal of Bacchus in the *Metamorphoses* is no exception. However, Ovid's perception of the god born to a human mother and a divine father is polyvalent; it changes interestingly in *Ars Amatoria*. The *Metamorphoses* in general (and the third book in particular) has treated the figure of Bacchus in an intriguing fashion, pitted against the hypermasculinity of Pentheus that largely reflects the Augustan Roman ideals of gender and sexuality. The paper tries to assess the gender fluidity in the mythical construct of Bacchus by contextualising Ovid's depiction of the character in the *Metamorphoses* in terms of some Roman terms related to gender prevalent at the time when the text was written, and its social and aesthetic resonance.

Keywords: Ovid, Bacchus, gender, hypermasculinity, binary.

In her essay, "Michelangelo's Reflections on Bacchus," Luba Freedman identifies two important aspects of Michelangelo's depiction of Bacchus – his effort of conferring a sense of antiquity to the statue by deliberately damaging it (which in itself is quite intriguing), and the features of the God as they have come down to us from antiquity, of which Michelangelo highlights three:

Michelangelo accentuated three aspects in the figure: youth, nudity, and effeminacy Two points should be made about Bacchus's effeminacy.

Not only does the figure have a soft abdomen, but it also has slightly swelling breasts, both traditionally feminine features A similarly effeminate Bacchus, to be sure, had also been rendered by Michelangelo's immediate predecessors, such as Jacopo Belini, Marco Zoppo and Antonio Federight. (Freedman 125)

The question of Bacchus's effeminacy is thus a lingering issue in critical discourses; it is persistently developed in several art forms, both literary and visual for sure, giving us a sense of a critical imperative to probe into the gender construct as a part of normative social pattern. With Ovid in *Metamorphoses* the issue, if not of overwhelming importance, is at least a matter of serious discussion, and not so much for its relevance in the story as for his attempts at exacting Augustan ideals of gender and sexuality in his text.

Bacchus is described in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Book 3 by Pentheus whose notion of masculinity/femininity is conspicuously Theban as he himself claims; Thebes was still young, and Cadmus's heroic feats to establish the state were fresh. The ideals of masculinity by then had found deep roots in the soil of Thebes – the kind of masculinity which underlined the heroic fortitude and achievements of its founder:

Remember him to whom you stand ally'd:
The serpent for his well of waters dy'd.
He fought the strong; do you his courage show,
And gain a conquest o'er a feeble foe.

.....

Then might the Thebans perish with renown:
But now a beardless victor sacks the town. (L 545-552)

Neither the 'beardless victor' nor the 'weak alarms of women's yells' should have swayed the Thebans at any rate; but Pentheus is scandalized to find that happening after all as the

Bacchantes have successfully popularised the God all over Thebes. Since Bacchus is born to Semele, an earthly Theban woman, and since his divinity is associated with the mystery that surrounds his birth from Jupiter's thigh after being miscarried as a foetus during Semele's death, all accusations that fly from Pentheus are centred on two issues primarily: his dubious status as a God, and his effeminate appearance as against Apollo's, the God the Thebans generally worshipped. The problem, therefore, lies in the very notion of difference: Bacchus is different from the rest of the divine beings for crossing boundaries in terms of gender markers and divine pedigree, though unwittingly. Given the prevalence of the motif of metamorphosis in Greek and Roman mythical stories and instances of homoeroticism in Greek society (Spartan youths were mostly acquainted with pederasty) an issue like gender-fluidity does not seem to be essentially problematic. What strikes as unique is the context of Augustan Roman masculinity and Ovid's own response to it, a part of that response showing in his depiction of Bacchus of course.

The third book of *Metamorphoses* itself has few stories which dramatize the gender stereotypes deconstructed to the best effect; for instance, Tiresias's story stretches the issue to its farthest, since Tiresias happens to live his life both as a man and as a woman. Even though the story of Tiresias deals with the question of gender fluidity in unequivocal terms in his switching from one gender identity to another, the element of ambiguity regarding one's gender identity is not of prime significance here. On the other hand, the story of Narcissus celebrates certain liminality in the discourse of gender and sexuality, otherwise absent in Tiresias's story. Narcissus is fated to die the moment his gaze turns towards his own self – the question of male gaze discovering in the mirror such an image that becomes an object of his own erotic attraction is problematized not merely for the non-normative sexuality it evokes, but also for the thwarted development of the ego it refers to. Here is one man who has developed a fatal, sexual craving for his own self, but has failed to realize that it has

become an eponymous symbol for his inability to love others throughout his life, the goddess Echo included! Moreover, Narcissus's phenomenal beauty is described as attractive not in the typical masculine or feminine ways, but in its approximation of some divine features:

The well-turn'd neck, and shoulders he descries,
The spacious forehead, and the sparkling eyes;
The hands that Bacchus might not scorn to show,
And hair that round Apollo's head might flow; . . . (L 419-422)

By combining the Apollonian and the Dionysian in the true sense of the term, Narcissus embodies in himself an ideal of beauty. The story of Diana and Actaeon also lays bare an intriguing game of power: the male gaze of Actaeon is countered and punished by Diana spying the inadvertent act of unfortunate Actaeon. In a way, therefore, the *raison d'être* of the third book of Ovid's text may be said to be a typical analysis of deviations from binaristic gender construct, in the context of which Bacchus emerges as a credible and enduring figure standing between the human and the divine, assimilating some feminine qualities in his biological maleness.

Pentheus, historically/mythically a Theban, however, behaves in the manner of a true Roman individual when it comes to his confrontation with Bacchus. Anderson opines, "Pentheus speaks for native Roman values of manliness and martial preparedness against the alien vice of effeminacy and religious fakery that he attributes to Bacchus and his corrupt followers" (389). Since Bacchus's overwhelming impact was felt in the Middle East and even India in the growth of vineyards, Bacchus's Asiatic connection was one of the reasons behind Pentheus's deep-seated suspicion – to him it was likely to have been imported and not indigenous to the Theban soil. On the other hand, Roman masculinity in Augustus's time is quite an overwhelming concern. Octavius Caesar consolidated the Roman military power to project Rome as a country of masculine men. His own status as the leader of men conforms to

the propagated idea of masculinity. Katie Thompson in her dissertation titled *Augustus and the Architecture of Masculinity* reveals how the idea of Roman masculinity in the late Republic and afterwards was enmeshed intricately with the discourses on penetration of three types – sexual, physical (wounds in battle) and visual (19-20). Referring to Kuefler's *The Manly Eunuch*, she lays bare the nuances of the words like *vir* and *mollitia*; the former is used for manly, courageous and powerful men and the latter for the effeminate men. Effeminacy was detected in one's behaviour as being womanly soft, his talking with a lisp, his walking and also, quite significantly, in one's lack of power (20). This was further associated with the 'humiliating' fact of one's being on the receiving end of sexual and visual penetration: "What all these terms together illustrate is sexual relationships in Roman culture were made up of a man, *vir*, and an other, which could be a woman or man of different social status" (Thompson 21).

The Spartan custom of pederasty was lingering in Augustan Rome with some significant modifications as an adolescent boy was often considered to be a substitute for a woman keeping in view his position in a sexual relationship with an older man; however, the entire thing was treated in a pejorative fashion for it was shameful for a young man socially belonging to a higher class to have feminine experiences. He was to qualify as an 'impenetrable penetrator' to be precise. Moreover, Ovid's handling of the theme of love in *Ars Amatoria* and *Amores* is largely a manifestation of the normative gender roles and construct that would assert its presence in every prescription that Ovid gives to the lovers. Ovid's reference to Bacchus in connection with *Ars Amatoria* is intriguingly different though – different from what we see in the *Metamorphoses*. Since Bacchus falls for Ariadne, the Cretan girl and surprises her by his offer of love from among the inebriated entourage of Maenads and Satyrs, after Theseus has deceived her, he fits into the role of a lover wooing his beloved with a perfect blend of softness and beautiful gift of the sky, but not with the

typical masculine aggression. Nevertheless, Ovid's suggestions to lovers encompass quite an array of activities which provide a propitious berth for behaviours unlikely to be mistaken for rapacious and aggressive male gestures; here, love happens to be the prime concern, and therefore, Bacchus unequivocally qualifies as a male lover:

Ah, Bacchus calls to his poet: he helps lovers too,
and supports the fire with which he is inflamed.

. . . .

She shook, like a slender stalk of wheat stirred by the wind,
and trembled like a light reed in a marshy pool.

To whom the god said: 'See, I come, more faithful in love:
have no fear: Cretan, you'll be bride to Bacchus.

Take the heavens for dowry: be seen as heavenly stars:
and guide the anxious sailor often to your Cretan Crown.'

He spoke, and leapt from the chariot, lest she feared
his tigers: the sand yielded under his feet:

clasped in his arms (she had no power to struggle),

he carried her away: . . . (*Ars Amatoria*, Book -I, Part 15)

In Bacchus's case the transformation of the effeminate God into a masculine lover is highly intriguing: "A man, to be a man, must be *durus* (hard), but love (for which he needs to be *durus*) will make him *mollis* (soft)" (Sharrock 97). Theseus's betrayal of Araidne is followed by Bacchus's 'manly' gesture of rescuing her from morbidity and offering of love and promising immortality through transformation into a constellation of stars.

Unlike Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*, the *Metamorphoses* offers a different perspective to gender roles and gender fluidity; the mythical narrative has a completely different resonance. *Ars Amatoria* deploys mythical instances for elucidation and substantiation, but the latter

thrives entirely on myth. As a consequence, the distancing between reality and mythological 'fabula' can conveniently be projected as an 'apologia' in the sense that Bacchus's effeminacy then remains restricted within a mythical construct, and Ovid himself is exempted from a commitment that could create a critical impasse regarding the projection of the divine figure. There is yet another dimension to the way Bacchus is depicted in the third book of the *Metamorphoses* – it is through the narration of Bacchus's devotee, Acoetes. When Pentheus sends his men for capturing Bacchus, they find Acoetes, whose worshipful adoration for the God seems to have originated from his experience of Bacchus's divinity. However, Acoetes's description provides a critical parameter for approaching the equation between power and gender construct in favour of Bacchus. The men on board Acoetes's ship had a vile intention of waylaying the young boy, beautiful and lithe and apparently incapable of protecting himself and sell him somewhere; their behaviour betrays a kind of rapaciousness. Moreover, Bacchus *appeared* vulnerable. He convinced the rowdy men with his speech projecting his helplessness:

The beauteous youth now found himself betray'd,
And from the deck the rising waves survey'd,
And seem'd to weep, and as he wept he said:

. . . .

Will such a multitude of men employ
Their strength against a defenceless boy? (L 652-658)

Just as *vir* and *mollitia* created a disjuncture, a normative and binaristic way of looking at the masculine and the feminine, there was yet another set of contrasts – between *vir* on the one hand and *pueri*, *adulescents* and *homines*, on the other, the latter set of words indicating male youth. Thompson adds, referring to Jonathan Walter's *Invading the Roman Body* that the term *puer* or 'boy' was often used to denote the penetrated female (21). Bacchus's self-

portrayal in front of the sailors as a ‘defenceless boy’, therefore, is highly nuanced. As much as the Spartans, the Romans celebrated courage as an essential aspect of masculinity. In the context of a desired quality of a Spartan or a Roman man, Bacchus’s own submission would look scandalously weak and effeminate. However, the subversion of the gender role is here deliberate and ironical. Bacchus increases their confusion with his projected image of defencelessness; soon his vengeance is unleashed on them and all the crew members barring Acoetes are metamorphosed into dolphins. The story is so incredible that Pentheus does not believe any of it. Nevertheless, his own fate is sealed, as Tiresias predicted and as Pentheus gets killed by the Bacchantes including his own mother and aunts. Even in the episode of Pentheus’s death, the subtextual reference is that of the women overpowering and even killing the man exuding a kind of masculine qualities which are by and large toxic. Pentheus’s hypermasculinity has certainly backfired, to be precise. But, more than the gender identity, it is his divinity that raises Bacchus to a position of power that Pentheus fails to measure or challenge successfully.

Alison Sharrock while discussing ‘Gender and Sexuality’ in Ovid writes, “Masculinity is predicated not only on sexual performance but also on autarky If the very thing that makes a man (sexual power) also unmakes him (by undermining his autarky), then gendered categories are never going to be easy and stable” (96). She begins her discourse with a reference to the intriguing story of Iphis (*Metamorphoses*, Book-XI); a story that may be considered as proving a counter to the normative gender construct in which the girl is reared and nurtured as a boy (reminding us, by a process of cultural transposition of the princess of Manipur, Chitrangada). However, Iphis’s story takes another disturbing turn when she gets a woman as her bride – a problem that is solved by the intervention of Isis. Nevertheless, the stories of sexual or gender metamorphosis are mostly highlighted in the third book of the text, although the motif of gender fluidity is an integral part of the text’s

major thrust. Bacchus's effeminacy is not a cultural acquisition, but a mythical given and is consequent upon a Greek and Roman perception of masculinity, more precisely, upon the Roman variety. It is, therefore, in the gender fluidity we associate with Bacchus, in Ovid or in Michelangelo that the mythical and the historical blend in perfect harmony. The Roman Republic's denunciation of Bacchanalia is reflected in Pentheus's voice; but it is in the artistic perception of Bacchus's effeminacy across culture, across time and space that history is subtly overtaken by myth.

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Relativity of the Genre, Theme, Idea and Image in Artistic Expression

Seitnazarova Guljahan Suxanatdinovna

Abstract

In this article, we have focused on one of the important aspects of the creative process and the significance of masterpiece and artistic skills. As the object of research, we have chosen the feature article “Keksa tutdagi kuz” written by the poet of Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan, Ibraim Yusupov. We have analyzed artistic skills by means of the genre, subject, idea and image in this feature article. The prominent literary scholar, Kamal Mambetov, stated that Ibrayim Yusupov is a master of creating lyrical images. We have tried to give a theoretical and practical argument that his artistic skill as a writer and a publicist itself to be unique, high peak and school of skills.

Keywords: publicists, artistic skill, feature article, genre, idea.

In the process of creation, it is determined by the relevance of the subject matter of the writer to his place in society and his reputation, the deep analysis of the facts, his art and skill, the impact on the audience as well. In this article, we want to tackle one of the most important aspects of the creative process, the significance of the artistic skill. The masterpiece is a broad concept, which, according to his literal meaning, means *dexterity* and *workmanship* (*Tolkovy slovar Karakalpakskogo yazika* 521). The masterpiece has a number of creative factors in it. Its scope is large.

Literary scientist Izzat Sultan opines that, “The writer's skill is the ability to find words and phrases that can convey the most accurate and most effective way of describing the subject and spiritual state of the subject” (*Adabiyot nazariyasi* 38). Furthermore, Hotam Umurov, the author of *Theory of Literature* points out that: “the writer summarizes the facts gathered on the basis of a particular idea, and enriches it with his own experience, and summarizes it in many ways” (*Adabiyot nazariyasi* 52). It is the result of proficient knowledge, hard work, research and experience.

In the creative working process, there have been set good traditions such as *teacher-student* and *school of masterpiece* and, currently, it is considered to be particular relevance to be studied. Especially, there are so many important aspects of studying the craft school of the folk poet and publicist of Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan, Ibrayim Yusupov, is quite significant. We will not be mistaken if we say that his work “Autumn at the Old Mulberry Tree” to be a clear example of masterpiece. Feature article is a small epic form of the artistic and publicistic genre (*Adabiyotshunoslik lug‘ati* 210). In many literary books *feature article* has been described to have its own unique role in the classification of literary and journalistic genres.

However, according to the requirements placed on it, the documentary prevails, that is, its characters are alive and vitally important people and the events that are happening, are largely related to the ongoing reforms in society. In the *Literary Dictionary*, some contradictory insights include the following: in some publications, it is claimed that feature article by nature, can be included in literary literature, belletristics or publicity. However, in this case, the distinctive aspects between the story and feature article cannot be clarified, because some stories have featured character. Therefore, it is better to understand the concept as a genre of belletristy and publicity (*Adabiyotshunoslik lug‘ati* 211).

Thus, journalistic features of the feature article make the way to its description of the main aim. It defines the role and importance of this genre in journalism. As we have mentioned above, in order to name feature article as *literary genre* it is necessary to show the differentiating aspects of the story. There are many similarities between these two smaller genres. If we compare them according to the essence and requirements of the feature article, we can see that there have been used more facts in it and it is true to life. And that is exactly what it is about a genre of journalism. There are several varieties of feature article. In the book of *Journalism and Publicity* (*Jurnalistika va publitsistika* 265), feature article is divided into portraits, events, troubles, roads, and trials feature articles in terms of its form, purpose and object.

Our object is the portraits of feature article. The subject of portrait feature article is so varied and deep that we can choose them who are loyal workers and public figures who serve all aspects of society as the main character. It is more important to introduce the main hero to society and to the audience than the character's identity. During the writing process of feature article, the author tries to make the hero's inner world, his surroundings and his attributes as his contemporaries. It has been stated that when a social portrait of a man is discovered skillfully in the featured article, it will have a great learning force. Every image that has been discernible, makes a place in the heart of the reader, and will help him to determine his place in life. The activeness and the viciousness of a hero in feature article make a decision (*Zamon va mezon* 16). Readers can have explanations and understandings with the help of the concept of the author and the portrait. He starts to recognize him and wakes up and his kindness is awakened. In fact, the aim of the feature article is not to praise heroes, but to expose their qualities, human qualities and, most importantly, their efforts to the development of society and people.

The work “Autumn at the Old Mulberry Tree” by the publicist I. Yusupov, describes a man who fully embraces these aspects. It has been written about Seydulla bobo, a son of Murtaza, a prominent cotton-grower of the collective farm named Akhunbabayev in the Kenges region in the Republic of Karakalpakstan.

When you read the book, it appears as literary art, and when you read it again, you realize that it is talking about a particular person in life and that the truth of life is explicitly stated. Since the feature article is considered to be one of the most popular artistic publicistic genres, there is a strong link between the artistic literature and the publicist character. First of all, we have tried to clarify the inner character of the writer, and then what he says, how the creator finds his audience despite setbacks. During the study, we tried to keep in mind and analyze even the smallest theoretical elements. The first impression of a literary work can be appeared in the form and content, its first stage begins with the idea and the theme.

The theme is the essence of literary work, and the idea is the cognition or intention that determines the purpose of the subject (*A'debiyat teoriyasi* 54). The theme of the work is the essence of the writer's intentions to develop, as well as the key idea of the subject matter is closely linked to the idea of a great idea. The idea is rooted in the images in the art, through their actions, struggles, aspirations and desires (*Adabiyot nazariyasi* 27).

The idea takes on the burden of an entire work. It is noteworthy that the feature article is called “Autumn at the Old Mulberry Tree”. The reason is that the author connects everything with the hero and all the related processes around him, even with his conclusion. Thus, the idea should open the full theme and serve to ensure its logical connection. In some literary works these two concepts define the fate of the entire masterpiece.

It is important to mention that—thanks to a single theme—the author has a strong talent. This requires a high level of experience and skill. In “Autumn at the Old Mulberry Tree” the subject is of a great deal, and now we learn how the idea opens it. It is evident from

each work of the writer that “it is a skill for Ibraim Yusupov to create an artistic image to the entire living and lifeless nature” (*Ha'zirgi* 40).

The masterpiece cannot be created without imagination as the potential and the potential of the image is wide. Image is created by using impressive words, a strong feeling, and an expression of opinions, which reflects the manifestations of human beings, their imaginations, their morals, and features of their character. The idea of the work is revealed with the help of these images. The first expressions of creating characters are a portrait and landscape.

Portrait is the appearance of any hero. Landscape is nature. The portrait and the landscape are juxtaposed. That means that, first of all, you come to know how the person looks (*A'debiyat teoriyasi* 65-67). The subject and the idea of the work itself illustrates the use of portraits and landscaping in image formulation. The skill of writer's ability to reveal his character to the audience, and the realistic and vitality of what he describes, define the success of his work. In this regard, every single sentence he uses shows that the publicist is always in search.

The author portrays the character of the hero in a special unusual way. We can learn this from the following examples:

On the apperance of Seydulla Baba there is no indication that he is different from other elderly people. On the contrary, his appearance in the sun is sunburn, and his mustache and eyebrows that we do not yet see are old.
(*G'arri tuttag'i gu'z* 5)

It is expressed as the following in Uzbek:

Сейдулла бобонинг бўйида уни бошқа кексалардан ўзгача етиб кўрсатиб турадиган ҳеч қандай белгиси йўқдек. Аксинча унинг қуёшдан кўйган юз кўриниши, сергак тортган қадди-басти, ҳали кексаликнинг қирови

урмаган мўйлови ва иш кийими уни кўзимизга оддий қилиб
гавдалантиради. (*G'arri tuttag'i gu'z 5*)

The creator will introduce us to our hero, as he looks at the best tariffs. The description, “his appearance in the sun is sunburn, and his mustache and eyebrows that is not old enough” (*G'arri tuttag'i gu'z 5*) shows particular hero, and that he is a simple man, in the labor-power of his village. The landscape below illustrates the extent to which the artist understands the nature of the vision,

Autumn is pouring its color on the fields, the golden yellow ornaments on fruit trees. In this color, the farmer's eyes read the joyful words “it is riped”! The autumn is like a flaming rainbow, with a silver laughter showing pearl cotton teeth, and white foothills of the mountain.... (*G'arri tuttag'i gu'z 6*)

In Uzbek language we can see that it has a little difference in the translation:

Куз далаларга, мева дарахтларига ўзининг олтин сариқ буёғини
сўркамоқда. Бу рангдан дехқон кўзи «пишди!» деган қувончли сўзларни
ўқийди. Куз гоҳи чираси тўлиб тўрлаган гулобидек чирт-чиртлайди, гоҳи
пахта ғўзаларининг марварид тишларини кўрсатиб кумуш кулгу билан
кўлади, гоҳи тоғ этагида оқ булутлар каби пунктларда қирмон бўлиб
кўтарилиб ётади.... (*G'arri tuttag'i gu'z 6*)

The creator draws the autumn painting, which is the golden chapter of nature, by painting the landscape with a great skill. He tries to express the autumn and his genuine beauty through artistic means, such as, the autumn a *floral furrow*, the cotton pitching, as “laughing with silver laughter showing gems”, orchard at points, like “white clouds in the foothills of the mountain” (*G'arri tuttag'i gu'z 6*).

Through the landscape, the character of the heroes can also be adjusted to the surroundings. In the example below, we see that the mood of people is naturally related to the

nature: “autumn leaves the orchards on the fruit trees. In this color, the farmer's eyes read the joyful words “it is riped!” (*G’arri tuttag’i gu’z 6*).

When you read the feature article you feel the breath of the writer. We can connect this with the author’s words. “The author's words are in any artistic work. Literary works cannot be created without this. Because the events in the book are bounded by the author’s words” (*A’debiyat teoriyasi 77*). The writer expresses his hero as in his imagination and mind. For instance,

But when he got to know it, it was not difficult for him to realize that this man's old-fashioned coat was in a state of collective labor, and that he was in awe of the highest human qualities. I thought, “The truth is the hero of the poem,” and what he carried from his elderly village to his hands was his pure heart. (*G’arri tuttag’i gu’z 7*)

In order to show his distinctive heroic character from others, the publicist speaks about the indispensable features of his hero, for instance, the publicist wrote about Seydulla, “this man's old-fashioned coat was in a state of collective labor, and that he was in awe of the highest human qualities” (*G’arri tuttag’i gu’z 7*) of course, such information will greatly assist in explaining the character.

It is possible to call it differently, that is, the audience is not interested in the work if individual situations have not been expressed. Individual events or individual features of the character not only reveal the difference, but also give opportunity to write original masterpiece. We may cite an example:

When Seydulla grandfather moved his horse and tried to pick up cotton, it was left a little to the sunset. We talk about the past and the days while harvesting cotton. It seemed to him that he had nothing to say. I also wanted to know his

past and the way of his life, but grandfather did stop talking about today.

(*G'arri tuttag'i gu'z 7*)

In Uzbek language, we can see that in the following:

Сейдулла бобо эшшагини ўрнидан силжитиб, теримга шижоат қилганида қуёш ботишига орқон бўйи қолган эди. Биз пахта териб ўтган-кетканлардан гаплашамиз. Унинг гапга ҳуши йўқдек кўринди. Мен унинг ўткан ҳаёт йўлини ҳам билгим келади, бобо бўлса бугунги кун ҳақида гапиришдан ортмасди. (*G'arri tuttag'i gu'z 7*).

In the example above, it was used to reveal the individual features of Seydulla grandfather.

We may cite another extract,

Shamurat and Seydulla are the famous collectors of the Akhunbabayev collective farm of the Kenges district, those who are old and show great examples to young people with working hard, have instilled in me a warm feeling ... (*G'arri tuttag'i gu'z 5*)

In Uzbek language we can see that in the following, “Шамурат ва Сейдулла Кенес тумани Ахунбабаев номидаги колхознинг атоқли пахтакорлари, қариганда меҳнат билан ёшариб, ёшларга намуна бўлаётган бу ажойиб инсонлар қалбимда илиқлик уйғотди...” (*G'arri tuttag'i gu'z 5*). The writer demonstrates his mastery over expression, his personality, his imagination, and feelings of the hero through the artistic skill.

“One of the cornerstones of creating character is to use the details. Detail is a piece of art, and it is closer to the “subtle representation of objects” (*A'debiyat teoriyasi 78*). A small detail can serve as an opening of the entire work, and in some cases, it may be in the center of the main focus.

The subject of the work is “Autumn at the old mulberry tree”, of course, here a question may be arisen, what it has to do with Seydulla grandfather. The detail that we are

looking for is the old mulberry tree. The following is an example of how the author skillfully used details to describe the life in the village, to think about life, to explain the value of old age, human intelligence, and labor. We can see this in the following examples in Uzbek language:

Икки звено оралиғида, бригада қирмонининг ортида ҳайбатли кекса тут дарахти ўсади. У бир илдиздан жуфт бўлиб чиқиб, биригиб ўсган, ён бағри қалин чўп. Кекса тут чамол йўлида туриб, қанчадан-қанча қаҳратон қишининг бўронига дуч келганлигидан бўлса керак, чоқлари эртақларда тасвирланадиган бургуд ин қилган кўрқинчли дарахт бутоқларидек қийчик, чирмалиб, ҳаммаси бир томонга энгашган. «Юз йил илгари экилган» дейичади, қишлоқ одамлари...

Қуёш қалин қора толларнинг орқасига беркиганида мен Сейдулла оғанинг пахта мойдонлари тарафга ўтиб бораётиб, шу кекса тутнинг бўйида қолган бир вақтлардаги совуқ тушли савлат нишонларини кўриб, ҳаёт ҳақида ҳаёл сурдим (*G'arri tuttag'i gu'z 6*).

We cannot but admire the truth of the author's truth. An old man tells about his painful traces, from the bitter past of the old gray-haired image. In his fate, he described the triumphant days of the human beings, the memorable memories and its effects through artistic means. In contrast to this detail, the author points out the hero's image as well as the insights into the unchanging principle of life. In addition, genre of the feature article, theme, idea and image is a proven fact that the artist possesses advanced skills. In addition, in the work Seydulla grandmother, and also his wife, Begzada, the crew of the brigade Qatira, the character of a prominent Uzbek cotton founder Shamurat Musaev were also skillfully exposed.

In conclusion, these examples illustrate that the author has the ability to choose the character and the ability to choose the right one. In fact, the human personality and conduct are influenced by some of its surroundings. He has made a great contribution to the formation of a real person in all aspects of Seydulla grandfather, who has turned his life into a life-cycle of honesty.

Understanding Seydulla grandfather's compassion for the land, his eagerness to work, his honesty, and the high humanistic qualities of his character, his words and his attitude toward the others, are expressed in the writer's words: here is the hero of a real poem (*G'arri tuttag'i gu'z* 5).

In fact, intelligence and labor are the great beliefs given to us by life. It is a good thing to be remembered and admired, even years after years. He gives eternal life to the human being.

We would say that creativity might have two lives. Notwithstanding the fact that Ocherk publishes the youngsters in his earlier life, that is, the social media of 1956, heroes in it, the workplace, and ideas have not had lost the essence yet. It is likely written for today's hero. The prominent literary scholar, Kamal Mambetov stated: "Ibraim Yusupov is a master of creating lyrical images" (*A'debiyat teoriyasi* 43).

Thus, we have tried to analyze certain aspects of the fact that his talent, artistic skills as a writer, a publicist and a journalist is a great masterpiece.

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Bridging the Divide: Kazi Nazrul Islam and Nationalism

Dr. Sharmila Ray

Abstract

In my essay I have tried to show how Kazi Nazrul Islam wielded the all-important weapon of language to give impetus to the cause of Nationalism. The argument is based on the premise that the dynamics of creativity, the quality of imagination and the question of memory that are associated with creative writing cannot be ignored. Literature deconstructs memory if only to construct new memory to be further renewed and transformed by the receiver's mind. Today, seven decades later after the independence of India, as we try to recover a sense of what the experience of nationalism actually meant to the people, we need to turn to the many layers of histories that lie submerged beneath the official history.

Keywords: nationalism, colonialism, freedom-struggle, independence.

‘Metaphor interprets memory,’ says Cynthia Ozick when she discusses how metaphor presses hard on language and storytelling and is at the core of the use of language. The extraordinary and appalling experiences and sometimes everyday practices make way into expression in the language of communication which in turn reach out to others, to influence, ignore and take action. The question then comes to my mind: should we disregard the great examples of creative literature as ‘non-history’ or take them up as imaginative and creative reproduction of history where writers uncover the reality surrounding them together with the reality of the past together with actuality and memory, events and legends? Each creative text is a unique

representation, a powerful metaphor of a specific memory or experience. Each story, event, observation is a distinct metaphor seeking to give tangible shape to some facet of the historical phenomenon of Indian Nationalism.

In my essay, I have tried to show how Kazi Nazrul Islam wielded the all-important weapon of language to give impetus to the cause of Nationalism. The argument is based on the premise that the dynamics of creativity, the quality of imagination and the question of memory that are associated with creative writing cannot be ignored. Literature deconstructs memory if only to construct new memory to be further renewed and transformed by the receiver's mind. Today, seven decades later after the independence of India, as we try to recover a sense of what the experience of nationalism actually meant to the people, we need to turn to the many layers of histories that lie submerged beneath the official history. Here Nazrul Islam becomes important. Feelings, emotions and expressions are some of the important things that make up the history of an event. Creative writing, I believe, explores possibilities of various kinds of truths rather than establishing any facts with a finality. For what is truth? Events are not static. Each event has a different interpretation. In other words the perceived, that is the event, recorded by the perceiver and it differs from on to the other depending on socio-economic, political and cultural perspective.

The Indian nationalist movement that developed in Bengal during the last quarters of the nineteenth century was dominated by high-caste Hindus. These men primarily came from the Brahmin, Kayastha and Vaidya castes and played important roles allotted to the Indians in the administration of the British Raj, in professions and in the cultural canvas of Bengal. The Indian National Congress for its first thirty years made no persistent efforts to bring under its fold Muslims and low-caste Hindus or to build a mass organization. The Muslims were much slower to gain Western education in Bengal. Bringing together all the Muslim residents in Bengal as an ethnic category was a difficult task. Many of those in the small Muslim elite

were Urdu speaking and did not consider themselves as 'Bengalis'. The model followed by them were the Arabic and North Indian aristocratic, cultural, and religious ones. Appeal was made to the Great Tradition of Islam and prestige was given to Arabic names, descent from the Prophet, membership in the Ashraf, or upper class Muslim community of India. Bengali speaking Muslims often had an insecure identity, they felt they lacked distinctiveness because they were mainly illiterate and peasants and both the Hindus and Urdu speaking Muslims looked down on them. In the 1920s some of the educated among the Bengali Muslims began to fight back against those, Hindus and Muslims, who derided them. Although one trend was to learn Urdu and assimilate the great Tradition of Islam, another was to assert that Bengali was their language and they would continue to use it and to write creatively in it. Several literary groups flourished at Dhaka University and one poet emerged whom the entire Bengali literary world hailed as a master: Nazrul Islam. The noted poet Buddhadev Bose wrote in *Acre of Green Grass*, Calcutta, 1948, that Nazrul Islam's appearance synchronized with that great upheaval in Indian life known as the first non-cooperation movement. He went further to say that in Bengal, people found in him a voice of the moment. Freedom from bondage was the keynote of the poems of his first phase. The poems were wild, exuberant and intoxicating. Like Dwijendralal Roy and Satyendranath Dutta before him, he wrote with equal passion on Hindu and Muslim subjects. His mind cherished and nourished on the legends and myths of both religious groups and was equally home with Goddesses Kali and Kamal Pasha. The *Dumketu* dated 17th October 1922, carried an editorial on Kamal Pasha. The editorial went on to say that the Indians have been incited to take up violence in preference to their policy of non-violence if they would sincerely intend to liberate India, under the cover of paying tribute to Kamal Pasha for armed and sturdy resistance for the recovery of the lost Turkish dominions. 'Kamal Pasha' was reprinted in the eighth issue of *Dhumketu*, dated 12th September 1922. It also carried a special section entitled *Muslim Jahan*

(the Muslim World) which would be dominated by the news about the continuing success of the followers of Mustafa Kamal Pasha fighting against the Greek invaders and Nazrul's comments in this section put stress on such subjects as heroism and success of the Kamalities against the Greeks.¹ Nazrul was inspired by Kamal's uprising for national emancipation and eulogised the Turkish war of liberation in poem called *Ranobheri* (War Trumpet).² The central message of *Ranobheri* was armed struggle to death for freedom. In an introductory comment written in prose below the poem's title, Nazrul proposed to send ten thousand volunteers from India to the Government at Ankara to fight the Greeks. Thus, Nazrul made it clear that his support lay with the nationalist Turkish government instead of the puppet Sultan of Istanbul.³

Born into a Muslim middle class family, Nazrul Islam received religious education and worked as a muezzin at a local mosque. He got initiated into poetry, drama and literature while working with theatrical groups. After his maktab education and the priestly job, Nazrul received a very different kind of experience that had a great liberalizing influence on his mind, opened him to more free thinking and that later ignited the poetic spark latent in him. The ill paying job together with the sameness of village life led him away from the Islamic institutions to something very un-Islamic but quite creative, artistic, better paying and above all colourful. This was provided by the theatrical groups in which he worked as a composer of songs and dance dramas that were full of Puranic, Sufi, Vaisnava, Baul and secular traditions in Bengal's rich folk culture. He also dealt with historical topics such as *Akbar Badsha* and social themes such as *Chasar Sang*.⁴ After serving in the British Indian Army, Nazrul established himself as a journalist in Calcutta. He joined the staff of the *Bangiya*

¹ See 'Muslim Jahan' sections in 'Dhumketu', vol 1, nos 8, 9 and 12 (September 14, 15 and 26, 1922).

² 'Ranobheri' *Nazrul Rachonabali*, vol 1 p. 33.

³ See Roderic H. Davison, Turkey: Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1968, *passim*.

⁴ Rafiqul Islam, *Jiban o Kabita*, Mullick Brothers, Dhaka, 1982, p. 11.

Mussalman Sahitya Samiti. Round about 1921 he produced a bunch of poems that included a number of romantic pieces. But most significantly these contained at least four songs of national awakening, calling for heroic sacrifice in the cause of nation's freedom.⁵ The immediate cause of this change seems to have been the non-cooperation movement launched by Gandhi in 1920. The unprecedented agitation shook every nook and corner of the British Raj. The poet was immediately drawn to the political reality and its predicament slowly crept into his poems giving them a new force, energising and bringing dynamism to everyday words. The tempo continued till January 1922 by which time he composed a series of biting poems that earned him the epithet of *Bidrohi Kobi* (Rebel Poet). At Comilla, Nazrul not only composed songs for the ongoing non-cooperation movement, but he himself participated in the agitation as it engulfed the town. He was repeatedly approached by local leaders to compose song for the occasion. The poet became a popular figure in Comilla's political circles and the leaders gathered at the railway station to bid him farewell for Calcutta soon thereafter.⁶

A number of preoccupations held Nazrul's mind in quick succession in the later months of 1921. Revolution in Turkey, Marxism with Muzaffar Ahmad, news of non-cooperation movement as well as family involvement all found a tumultuous expression in *Bidrohi*, (*The Rebel*). It was composed during one night in the last week of December, 1921, at 3/4C Taltala Lane, Calcutta. When *Bidrohi* was published its impact was intense and far reaching. The spirit of the poem matched the mentality of the people fighting for independence. In other words the poem created a sense of urgency transcending all boundaries of caste, creed and religion,

‘...I am the burning volcano in the bosom of the earth,

⁵ The four songs were ‘Bijoy Gaan’ (song of victory), ‘Pagal Pathik’ (*Crazy Traveller*), ‘Maron Baron’ (*Welcome to Death*) and ‘Bondi Bandonā’ (*Salute to the Prisoners*). All these were later included in Nazrul's ‘Bisher Banshi’ (*Flute of Venom*), 1924, only to be proscribed by the colonial government.

⁶ Ahmad, Muzaffar. *Kazi Nazrul Islam Smritikatha*, 5th ed, National Book Agency, Kolkata 1981, pp. 66, 80, 213.

I am the wild fire of the woods,
 I am Hell's mad terrific sea of wrath!...
 ...I am the rebel eternal,
 I raise my head beyond this world...'

(Translated by Kabir Choudhury)

The meter of *Bidrohi* is also reflective of the turbulent time and the restive character of the poet. The meter in the poem is free verse which was pioneered in Bengali in the 1860s by Michael Madhusudan Dutta. It was further developed by Rabindranath Tagore and other poets, but all of them used it in *aksarbritto* (letter-based) and *swarobritto* (sound-based) and never in *matrabritto* (accent-based). That was left to Nazrul and he did it with success.⁷ Poet and critic Jibannanda Das (1899-1954) felt that the topsy-turvy times could be unmistakably reflected in free *matrabritto*. All three styles of free verse were used by Nazrul to give life to his words, metaphors and allusions in some of his exalted poems.

Bidrohi was eagerly seized upon by the managers of two journals—*Moslem Bharat*, a monthly and *Bijoli*, a weekly. *Bijoli* published it on 6th January 1922, coinciding with non-cooperation movement. 'Moslem Bharat' would not publish it till late February and in between the two publications it was reprinted in the prestigious *Probashi*⁸. The rebellious theme and language instantly hit the Bengali literary world and the twenty-two year old Nazrul shot to a glorious height of a national bard.

Around this time, that is the time of the composition of *Bidrohi*, Nazrul also produced *Bhangar Gaan*, (*The Song of Destruction*), at the request of Basanti Devi (1880-1974), wife of C. R. Das (1870-1925) who had just been taken into custody (10th December, 1921) and she took charge of his weekly *Banglar Katha*. He followed it up by writing such poems such

⁷ Syed, Abdul Mannan. *Chhando*. (Metre). Dhaka: Aboshar Prakashana Smastha, 2001. pp. 81, 143-147. Many others think Rabindranath Tagore first introduced free verse in Bengali. Even Syed has contradicted himself on this point in an earlier writing, *ibid*, p. 143.

⁸ Ahmad, Muzaffar. *op. cit.* pp.119-120

as *Proloyullash (Delight of Annihilation)*, April, 1922, *Dhumketu (Comet)*, August, 1922, *Raktambara-dharini Ma (The Mother in Red Robe)*, August, 1922, *Anandamoyeer Agomone (On The Arrival of the Goddess of Delight)*, September, 1922, *Shikol Parar Gaan, (Song of Enchainment)*, April, 1924, *Bidrohir Bani (The Rebel's Message)*, April, 1924 and 'Jihad' (*Tempest*), June-July, 1924, may be identified as Nazrul's poems of rebellion.

In 1922, Nazrul started a bi-weekly himself with a paltry sum of money from a stranger and called it *Dhumketu, (Comet)*. He wrote to several famous personalities asking for messages for the new journal. Eight such messages were printed in the first issue of *Dhumketu*. Tagore welcomed it in a beautiful quadruplet and wished: 'Awaken with a flush of light/ Those who are half-conscious.' Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay wished for 'fearless truthfulness' and Barindra Kumar Ghosh writing from Pondicherry, wished for 'exposure of all hypocrisies'.⁹ Extract from weekly report of 24th August 1922, of I.B.File-288/22: A bi-weekly newspaper entitled *Dhumketu (The Comet)* edited by Kazi Nazrul Islam...is openly preaching Bolshevism and urges the people of Bengal to resort to violence. The Calcutta Police are dealing with the matter. Another extract from weekly report of 31st August 1922, of I.B.File-288/22: The district of Bakarganj and Pabna report the circulation of *Dhumketu*, and in the former district it is reported that the people are reading it with great interest. This Publication is most pernicious and should be immediately suppressed. His activism led to his imprisonment by the British Authorities. Extract from weekly report of 28th January 1923, I.B.File-288/22: Kazi Nazrul Islam, editor of the *Dhumketu*, was convicted and sentenced on the 17th January 1923, to one year rigorous imprisonment under section 124A. I.P.C. by the chief presidency magistrate. On April 14th, 1923, he was transferred from the jail in Alipore to Hooghly. He began a forty-day fast as a mark of protest against the jail superintendent for his mistreatment towards him. Eventually he was released from prison in December 1923.

⁹ *Dhumketu*, Vol 1, No 1, 11th August, 1922, p. 2.

While in Prison he wrote *Rajbandhir Jabanbandi*, (*Deposition of a Political Prisoner*). His works were banned in the 1920s by the British Authorities.

Nazrul Islam was a mass oriented revolutionary, a passionate advocate of religious and ideological harmony as reflected particularly in his contribution toward better Hindu Muslim relationship. In 1920 Nazrul expressed his vision of religious harmony in an editorial in *Yugabani*. There he invited the Hindus, Muslimms, Buddhists and Christians to come together as brothers, transcending the barriers of narrowness, lies and selfishness. In another article entitled *Hindu Mussalman*, published in *Ganabani* on September 2nd, 1922, he wrote: 'I can tolerate Hindus and Muslims, but I cannot tolerate the Tikkism and Beardism.' Here both 'Tikki' (orthodox Brahmins sported a tuft of hair on their head to identify themselves as nobles and high caste and different from rest of the Hindus) and 'Beard' are symbols of orthodoxy and fundamentalism in both Hinduism and Islam. Nazrul was an uncommon voice of Islam, proclaiming universal values of peace freedom and cooperation, while repudiating any exploitation and bigotry in the name of religion. But his radicalism was not shared by a large number of Bengali Muslims. In fact, his genius attracted some Muslims and many of the literati and politically left, were Hindus. In *Amar Kaifiyat* (*My Explanation*), which was published from Calcutta in 1926 in a volume called *Sarbohara* the poet said that the revolutionaries thought him to be non-violent and resented his poems dealing with spinning wheels, the Brahmins regarded him as an atheist, some considered him as a follower of Confucious, those who fought for Independence of India did not like him, many preferred him to be with Europeans.

This is an eye opener. He transcended all socio-religious boundaries and it was difficult for the general masses to read a visionary, a man who wanted not only political independence but independence from small religious orthodoxy which divided the society horizontally and vertically and made the cause of independence difficult. In course of an

article dwelling on the oppressions committed by the rich on the poor, by the strong on the weak, the *Dhumketu* (Calcutta) of the 24th November 1922, (page 78), wrote ‘they frown at you wishing to keep you bow down by the strength of their guns, by the power of their taxation, by their sentries...say only for one day that you are not servants and that you (rich men) cannot live without us...’ In the darkening horizon of the ever growing rift between the Hindus and Muslims, Nazrul Islam sounded a clear warning:

Are they Hindus or Muslims? How dare you ask this?

Oh commander, tell them men are drowning, sons of our mother...

Durgam Giri Kantaro Moru

Nazrul articulated the aspirations of the downtrodden and criticized the socio-economic and political system that brought upon the misery. His poem ‘Daridrya’ reflects his view:

O poverty...

...you have given me courage

opened my inner eye and gave me a sharp-biting language

my curse has transformed my violin into sword...¹⁰

He became a critic of the Khilafat Movement, condemning it as hollow, religious fundamentalism. His rebellious expression extended to rigid orthodoxy in the name of religion and politics. He also criticized the Indian National Congress for not fighting for outright political independence from the British Raj. He became active in encouraging people to agitate against the British rule. He joined the Bengal state unit of the Congress party.

Nazrul was a poet who desired to use his poetry not as a source of pleasure only for a chosen few, but as a weapon for waging war of emancipation. His writings direct and simple fired the minds in bondage. He had neither the ironic self-detachment nor the conversational

¹⁰ Translated by Sharmila Ray. *Rachonaboli* Vol 1, p 357

tone. His images are concentrated visuals which act and depict, influence and mobilize. Despite his occasional lapses into verbosity, his words have eyes and hands that feel, touch and urges one to go on. It does not matter whether his poems are polished or unpolished, the fact remains that they never failed to communicate. They moved to the periphery of one's emotional life. To Nazrul freedom was a wider concept, for apart from political freedom it included freedom from rules and conventions, bonds and chains.

'I bend my head to none except myself.' This is self-reverence and self-confidence rather than egocentricity. The 'I' is not selfish or arrogant. On the contrary the poet had identified himself with the suffering humanity. His body of writings stimulated the mind, altered the totality of one's personal and public view and opened it to new truths which challenged the dominant ideological, cultural and political systems and therefore, created the backdrop so necessary for freedom struggle.

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Manoj Mitra's Play *Honey from a Broken Hive*: A Discourse of History and Culture

Mukul SK

Abstract

Schools of cultural studies are chiefly devoted to 'specify the functioning of the social, the economic, and political forces and power structures that are said to produce the diverse forms of cultural phenomena'(Abrams 53). Literature is one of the cultural phenomena that are 'viewed as endowed with meanings that are the product of social forces and conventions, and that may either express or oppose the dominant structures of power in a culture'(Abrams 54). Manoj Mitra's play *Honey from a Broken Hive* exemplifies a representative cultural discourse that expresses and opposes the dominant structures of power in Bengali or rather Indian culture in the post-Independence era. Though *Honey from a Broken Hive* is not a historical play, this play needs to be taken back to the socio-political conditions or 'historical conditions' from which the play emerged as a voice to address the subject of the marginalized. The aim of my paper is to scrutinize, identify and articulate all the 'state apparatus' that have been automatized and naturalized by the state power-politics through the Bengali play *Honey from a Broken Hive* by Manoj Mitra.

Keywords: cultural discourse, political forces, power structures.

Introduction:

Manoj Mitra is the one who dreams to see a revolution to bring all the sections of people on the same ground of humanity. He has longed to create a society where the dimensions of conflict and violence between unequal social forces come to an end. Manoj Mitra is one of the contemporary Indian playwrights who draw a new phase to the tradition of Indian theatre, incorporating new traits that concern the class relations and class struggles and that echo a revolutionary voice against the established order of society. He along with Utpal Dutt, Ajitesh Bandopadhyay, Bijon Bhattacharya and few more succeeds to enable the theatre frames to raise questions among people regarding social violence, injustice, and conflict. Up to date, Manoj Mitra wrote above one hundred plays and acted as a major role in many of his plays. He was awarded the *Asiatic Society Award* for his unique contribution to theatre in 2005. He wrote his plays in Bengali language and major portion of his plays has been translated into English. *Chhayar Prasad*, *Golpo Hekimshaheb*, *Chak Bhanga Modhu* are some of his best known plays translated into English.

Honey from a Broken Hive (Chak Bhanga Modhu) was written in 1969 and later translated into English. The play is set in a village in the Sundarbans against the backdrop of the Naxal movement in Bengal and dramatizes some of the heinous social diseases— class inequality and struggle, economic exploitation, and different forms of oppressions. The play is uniquely marked by its concern for the margins and the marginalized that are remained unnoticed by the main-stream Indian freedom movements. It centers on Matla Ojha and his family who belong to the lot of the downtrodden class, and projects the class conflict between Ojha (Matla and his family) and Jotedar (Aghor Ghosh). Aghor Ghosh is a monstrous money-lender who exploits and grabs people's property through his money-lending strategy. The whole village is crushed down for the social system of the 'Jotedar' class. Aghor Ghosh is bitten by a snake and poison spreads all over his body. Now it is up to Matla Ojha who has

the power to take the poison out of his body and the central action of the play surrounds the dilemma whether Matla should save the body of his class enemy or not. The body of Aghor is taken to the house of Matla. Matla initially does not want to save the life of Aghor because he is the cause of the destruction of the entire village. Badami, Matla's daughter, thinks that they should save Aghor's life on the ground that Aghor will, in return, spare them from the debt they owe to him. At last Matla takes the poison out of his body and gives a new life to him. But Aghor does not acknowledge their gratefulness to him, rather rebukes them for they wait so long to take the poison out, and demands the interest of the money they borrow from him. He shows a licentious desire for Badami and demands to take her to his house. A crowd of angered villagers gather before the house of Matla to throw all their anger on Aghor and thus Aghor breathes his last breath.

Methodology: Notion of Discourse and Concept of History in Cultural Studies

The practice of discourse analysis has been in vogue late in the 1980s. My study wishes to focus attention on the notion of discourse and on a cluster of other notions which have become closely associated with it. The notion of discourse has come largely from the amalgam of history, historiography and socio-cultural studies that are associated with the works of Michel Foucault, Louis Althusser, Michael Bakhtin, Lacan and with many schools of cultural studies in the 1980s. The present essay proposes to draw these modern perspectives on discourse to offer a critical exploration of Manoj Mitra's Play *Honey from a Broken Hive*.

Conceptually, Foucault's concept of discourse is much complex which is closely related to the other two notions—the power-relations and conflicting social structures, and knowledge. Several concepts organize Foucault's perspectives, which will be taken up while considering discourse in this essay. Foucaultian notion of discourse can be used to explore the power relations and power effects which manifest themselves within discourse which

Manoj Mitra documented in his play. The critical study of Manoj Mitra will show how the Bengali society maintains the class systems and validate the privileged positions of dominant class politically and economically over the working class.

Foucault, one of the most prominent critics in the modern and postmodern cultural studies, came out with some groundbreaking ideas that changed the general ideas on culture, society and history. He opines that each social phenomenon is constructed upon the struggle over power. And this is “bottom-up model of power, that is his focus on the way power relations permeate all relations within a society” (Mills 34). So, the social position of an individual is constructed by a particular discourse and he always remains in some level of power structures and he has the ability to bring a change in the structure of power relations. When modern readers come to approach history and culture with this method, it “allows an analysis which focuses on individuals as active subjects, as agents rather than as passive dupes” (Mills 34). In Foucaultian notion, discourse can control and construct the production of knowledge. Foucault also views that a physical phenomenon or object is independent from the discourses but it has been unconsciously constituted by invisible discourses:

The fact that every object is constituted as an object of discourse has nothing to do with whether there is a world external to thought . . . An earthquake or the falling of a brick is an event that certainly exists, in the sense that it occurs here and now, independently of my will. But whether their specificity as objects is constructed in terms of ‘natural phenomena’ or expressions of ‘the wrath of God’ depends on the structuring of a discursive field. What is denied is not that such objects exist externally to thought, but the rather different assertion that they could constitute themselves as objects outside any discursive condition of emergence. (qtd. in Mills 56)

That is, Foucault is focusing on the invisible operations of discourse that frame the utterances of an individual. What a man utters is always a production of the discourses that control the human knowledge. Foucault is also a historian who aims to discover the marginalized voices in the history, and in all cultural productions and then, “to re-do the things said by traditional records of history so that the ‘interior secret’ and the other history that runs beneath those records and is more fundamental would be uncovered” (Foucault *Archeology* 22). His studies identify and articulate the “interior secret” and the “initiating subjectivity” of a culture and “discover the law operating behind” the discourse of culture which “is constituted by a group of sequences of signs, in so far as they are statements, that is, in so far as they can be assigned particular modalities of existence” (Foucault *Archaeology* 50, 106).

The notion of power is another important concept in cultural studies which is connected with discourse. Foucault opines that “power circulates in all directions” (Tyson 284). It works as a chain and doesn’t flow in one direction and it is not just “a set of relations between the oppressed and the oppressor” (Mills 35). He opines that an individual is not always a subject to power; he can resist the power which is constituted in different forms of institutions. Power is not circulated through one single institution, but through various forms of social discourses struggling over power. Foucault believes that there is simultaneous existence of discourses in which power is not necessarily a constraining factor as he says in *History of Sexuality* (1978) that “if power was never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but say no, do you really believe that we should manage to obey it?” (36). It implies that power does have a constructive nature in itself and this is different from conventional Marxist and Feminist tradition which takes power as a restrictive and oppressive force. So, according to Foucault’s notion, no single discourse can be able to have long validity without any resistance. He thinks that the way discourse is formed “does not play the role of a figure that arrests time and freezes it for decades or centuries” (*History of Sexuality* 74). As he says:

There is no statement in general, no free, neutral, independent statement; but a statement always belongs to a series or a whole, always plays a role among other statements, deriving support from them and distinguishing itself from them; it is always a part of a network of statements. (*History of Sexuality* 99)

The way discourse circulates into the top of hierarchy of power is quite a complex process. Social institutions and discourse work simultaneously to exclude the statements that tend to exclude things which they categorize as false and which do not conform to their discourse. Phenomenon that tends to exist within the domain of a specific discourse should obey the rules of that discourse. In *The Archeology of Knowledge*, he claims that “it is always possible one could speak the truth in a void; one would only be ‘in the true’ however if one obeyed the rules of some discursive ‘police’ which would have to be reactivated every time one spoke” (224).

The present study of my essay “Manoj Mitra’s Play *Honey from a Broken Hive: A Discourse of History and Culture*” involves a reading of Manoj Mitra’s play *Honey from a Broken Hive* and then, a critical investigation of bourgeoisie discourses and their power-politics. The present study puts the terms ‘history’, ‘culture’, ‘discourse’ in its main debate and discussion. Theories of cultural studies will be our major tools to the present study.

Foucault’s method of genealogy will be taken up to examine various social truths and the discourses that create the truths. This method of genealogy doesn’t seek to search the origin of a truth but investigates how a particular social system is constructed through the strategized mechanism of power-relations. And this essay, through Foucault’s genealogy, aims to deconstruct the established systems of Bengali society. Antonio Gramsci’s concepts of hegemony will also be used to defend my arguments in this essay.

Honey from a Broken Hive: An Analysis

Honey from a Broken Hive is obviously a representative discourse of a particular time and place in which the play can be situated to unearth the various power forces, structures and dominations operated and circulated through different ‘ideological state apparatuses’. Modernist philosophers like Antonio Gramsci, Raymond Williams, Stephen Greenblatt, Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault propagate insights to identify and articulate the invisible functioning of different ‘social apparatuses’ through which the discourse of bourgeoisie ideology has been perpetuated and normalized into the grass roots of common masses. Here we can refer to the inquiries of Foucault who says:

It is not the “privilege”, acquired or preserved, of the dominant class, but the overall effect of its strategic positions – an effect that is manifested and sometimes extended by the position of those who are dominated. Furthermore, this power is not exercised simply as an obligation or a prohibition on those who “do not have it”; it invests them, is transmitted by them and through them; it exerts pressure upon them, just as they themselves, in their struggle against it, resist the grip it has on them. This means that these relations go right down into the depths of society, that they are not localized in the relations between the state and its citizens or on the frontier between classes (*Discipline and Punish* 26-27).

During the pre-Independence era the Bengali culture or rather the whole Indian culture was divided into different layers of power structures from the landlord to common people. This power mechanism continues some decades even after the Independence. Aghor Ghosh who represents the power of the landlord is a landowner and money-lender. He lends money to people in need and collects huge amount of interest from them. When they are unable to pay the interest, he grabs property, land, or any other things. This play is a cultural

product that is intended to expose the power structures and power-relations prevalent in Bengali culture and society, and portray its disastrous effects on the class of the dominated. As Lois Tyson writes: “all events—including everything from the creation of an art work, to a televised murder trial, to the persistence of or change in the condition of the poor—*are shaped by and shape* the culture in which they emerge” (Tyson 284). To carry out a sociological and cultural study, it will take us to the theories and inquiries of some modern cultural thinkers. New historicists conceive a literary text as a merely a production of the cultural practices and ‘codes’. As Abrams writes:

...new historicists conceive of a literary text as “situated” within the totality of the institutions, social practices, and discourses that constitute the culture of a particular time and place, and with which the literary text interacts as both a product and a producer of cultural energies and codes. (Abrams 244)

Manoj Mitra, a pro-Marxist and politically- inclined writer, attempts to create a discourse that reflects an alternate history—the history of the social conflict between unequal power relations and structures. Aghor Ghosh possesses the ‘power mechanisms’ of lending money in high interest and exploits the property and land and this power mechanism makes him able to exercise the power over the people. The Ojha family in this play represents the class that remains at the margin of the society. Matla and his family are crushed down by the power strategies Aghor and his class exercise over them. Matla and his uncle Jata often think of fleeing from the village to get rid of Aghor’s disastrous trap. Badami, a woman ripe with life in her womb, gets nothing for last few days to eat; neither could Matla manage any grain for his pregnant daughter. Badami cries:

Badami(expectantly): have you brought anything? Could you get anything? No? (picks up the empty net pouch.) Nothing? Three days and you've not been able to get a single grain! Let it die, the demon in my belly—let it die!

Malta acknowledges the same and says:

Matla: ...and then I remembered—Badam? Badam's not eaten for two nights...

Badam, crying and cursing her pa...Badam...

This is the harsh picture of this village people. The landowners and money-lenders transfer the village into a place of fear and hunger. People lose the peace of their minds and always try to avoid the glance of their 'master' Aghor Ghosh. The flowing dialogue shows how the people in the village are frightened with the glance of Aghor:

Excited voices in the distance. Jata comes running down the slope of the ridge. His voice quivers, his body trembles, the stick in his hand keeps slipping.

Jata: Matla—ah Matla—Matla—

Matla: What's the matter?

Jata: What've I heard...oh my God, what've I heard!

Matla: What've you heard?

Jata: Did you hear that, Granddaughter? Did you hear that? Ah...oh my God...

Badami: Why do you say the same thing?

Matla (raising his hand as if to slap). Look here...

Jata: Master! Master himself?...

Malta and Badami: Master?

Jata: Yes, yes, Master! Master of ill fame...Aghor Ghosh—

Matla: Aghor Ghosh!

Badami: he comes hither!

Matla: Oh my God!

...

Badami: If we can't pay him interest—

Matla: He'll kick my ass and grab all he sees before him... (161)

This is what the play intends to expose that Aghor, the Jotedar, will 'grab all he sees before him, if they could not pay him the interest. Jata's wife once ends her life by committing suicide when it reaches beyond her patience to bear the pangs of hunger. Louis Althusser comes up with relevant studies on power that is exercised through different social system ('apparatuses') and suggests that these apparatuses or the social discourses may carry hidden messages of the bourgeoisie and these phenomena should be taken seriously (Althusser 1-60). With his concept of "hegemony", Raymond Williams addresses the problem of ideology and says that "hegemony" or dominant ideologies which are maintained by a grouping of gender, ethnicity or class or profession encompass the "whole social process" (Williams 108-121). And this power does not originate only from the top of the political and socioeconomic structure. Foucault gives the ideas that "power *circulates* in all directions, to and from all social levels, at all times. And the vehicle by which power circulates is a never-ending proliferation of *exchange*: (1) the exchange of material goods through such practices as buying and selling, bartering, gambling, taxation, charity, and various forms of theft; (2) the exchange of people through such institutions as marriage, adoption, kidnapping, and slavery; and (3) the exchange of ideas through the various discourses a culture produces" (Tyson 284). Manoj Mitra here uncovers the struggles of the ordinary people who are not able to survive the situation the power apparatuses of the landowners and money lenders create over them. In *Some People, Some Plays*, Manoj Mitra writes:

...Matla and Badami of Honey from a Broken Hive I have seen from a very close. I have seen the rags in which they cover themselves. Seen the people of rough skin and hair sitting on the ground and eating cooked saag leaves from broken clay dishes. Poverty was their constant friend. They never thought of freedom. Poverty seemed to a deadly illness that enveloped them like a deep coma. (213)

It is here clear that the story of the play presents the contemporary socio-political conditions of Bengali culture. Louise Montrose, a new historicist, comes up with methods to dig out 'the historicity of text' and views that literature or any text "Consists of what are called representations—that is, verbal formations which are the 'ideological products' or cultural constructs of the historical conditions specific to an era". Here the story of Jotedar class and the class conflict between the Jotedar and the Ojha in the play is the main historicity of the play that can be seen as ideological products' or cultural constructs of the Bengali culture. Further, Manoj Mita has written the play *Honey from a Broken Hive* as a representation of "the complex power structures of domination and subordination which characterize a given society" to "undo these ideological disguises and suppressions in order to uncover its subtext of historical and political conflicts and oppressions which are the text's true, although covert or unmentioned, subject matter" (Abrams 193). Foucault moves ahead and discusses the invisible power struggles that operate at the grass roots level of the society and studies and highlights the politics of power and domination. As he says in an interview:

...that is to say on the basis of daily struggles at grass roots level, among those whose fight was located in the fine meshes of the web of power. This was where the concrete nature of power became visible, along with the prospect that these analyses of power would prove fruitful in accounting for all that had

hitherto remained outside the field of political analysis... (Foucault *Power/Knowledge* 116)

Here, the class conflict of the Ojha and the Jotedar is the “grass roots level...where the concrete nature of power became visible” (Foucault *The Order* 116) and this conflict between Ojha and Jotedar and the disguised exploitations and oppressions of Jotedar class through the power mechanism remain here as the central concern for the readers of cultural studies. Another conflict arises in the play when Aghor is bitten by a snake and his body is taken to the house of Matla to take the poison out of his body. People go to the house of the Ojha to take poison out when they have a snake-bite. But the hunger grips over the village in such an extreme way that they die of hunger and that they do not need to go to Ojha’s house. Jata says: “...snakes don’t bite people any more...such bad days these are...and what will they bite? Folks these days die without food...” (*Honey* 161). When the Ojha family comes to know that Aghor is bitten by a snake, they feel merry. Jatla says: “we’ll live if he dies. I owe him so much money...five times twenty *taka*...” (*Honey* 179)” Matla who knows the ways of poison does not like to give back Aghor his life because he is the cause of the destruction of the whole village. As Badami converses with Shankar, Aghor’s son:

BADAMI: to tell you the truth, we fear saving your pa...

SHANKAR: you don’t need to tell me that...you think I don’t know...?

...

BADAMI: Master! Master, I don’t know what made you say that...

But none of it’s untrue! That one man alone has destroyed this entire village...

SHANKAR: you think I don’t know that... I may stay at Shagunj but I come here every week (*Honey* 168).

Mitra's *Honey from a Broken Hive* shows how various social discourses propagate and establish its political and ideological supremacy through various agencies of power such as Zamindari system, money-lending, land revenues etc. as noticed in the present play. The playwright exposes the fact that through the cruel and brutal violence, the ruling govt. expresses their susceptibility. People in power are against any person or organization which refuses to accept the hegemonic culture and ideology. To this specific aspect of state's power mechanism one can refer to the inquiries of Foucault who asserts:

Power is no longer substantially identified with an individual who possess or exercises it by right of birth; it becomes a machinery that no one owns. Certainly everyone doesn't occupy the same position. Certain positions preponderate and permit an effect of supremacy to be produced. This is so much the case that class domination can be exercised just to the extent that power is dissociated from individual might. (*The Order* 156)

At last humanity wins over the class enmity. Badami comes to care for monstrous Aghor when he is bitten by a poisonous snake. The Ojha family agrees to save Aghor with the hope that he will, in return, help save her unborn child. Matla harbors the hope that Aghor will excuse their debt. Much against the will of the villagers, Badami tries to save the life of Aghor. For a moment the collective class enmity disappears for the individual will of care for Aghor. Matla saves his life by taking the poison out of his body. Aghor, an epitome of higher social force and power, gets back his life at the mercy of Matla, a man lying at the bottom of the social power. Audience might be surprised at "how the two retailers at one point seem to give Aghor Ghosh, the devilish moneylender, a lift of sorts, as they convey their love for him so gushingly, evoking his childhood—quite unexpected from the two toiling men, and quite uncalled for" (*Honey* 261).

Manoj Mitra here shows and advocates the Foucaultian notion that the man of higher social force does not have full control over all the social power relations. They sometimes need to come to the feet of the ordinary people. Manoj Mitra here shows what Foucault says ‘the productive aspect of power’ in Malta’s saving Aghor’s life through his power of chants. Power becomes repressive if it cannot produce the good. Malta, a person belonging to the class of the downtrodden, possesses some power that he can make poison rise and fall with his magic chants and that he can remove the poison from Aghor’s body. Malta has power and utilizes to produce the good by removing the poison out of Aghor’s body while Aghor has power which he uses to exercise domination over others. Mausumi Roy Chaudhury, a Bengali theatre critic and translator of Mitra’s plays, writes in her introductory notes for *The Theatre of Conscience*: “In such gifts of life at the margins, Manoj Mitra also writes the will to power; emperors, rulers and landholders must reach for the margins and offer themselves to intimate encounters with their social others” (232). As Foucault rightly says in an interview that:

But it seems to me now that the notion of repression is quite inadequate for capturing what is precisely the productive aspect of power. One which has been curiously widespread... If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it?

What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse.
(*The Order* 119)

‘There are no relations of power without resistances’ (*The Order* 142). The resistance that comes or should come against the disastrous social forces remains a central concern for

the humanist writers. Badami and Matla saved the life of Aghor and proved their humanist care for other human. But the moment Aghor could stand on his feet, he, instead of showing any kind of gratitude for them, demanded his interest and rebuked them for being late to remove the poison from his body. Moreover he showed licentious desire for Badami and planned to take her to his house. At the end of the play Badami were able to have the Jotedar killed by the hands of the angered villagers. The outrageous and angry mob of the village gathers in front of Matla's house and they beat up Aghor to death and thus established the value of life. Foucault views that resistance does not come from outside rather it germinates from where the power relations exist. As he says in an interview: "that there are no relations of power without resistances; the latter are all the more real and effective because they are formed right at the point where relations of power are exercised" (*The Order* 142). Here in the play, the revolt of the outrageous people against oppressive Aghor is Foucault's explored resistance that originated from common village people where the power is exercised.

Manoj Mitra's play here echoes the Foucaultian concept of the individual's ability to resist the power when Badami has killed the Jotedar at the end of the play. Badami possesses the power to resist the monstrous force Aghor and that resistance ends the life of Aghor. Thus Manoj Mitra creates a spirit of revolt or revolution and orients it, as Alan Sinfield has put it, "to the transformation of a social order which exploits people on grounds of race, gender, and class." (qtd. in Abrams 188)

To conclude though Matla's action of saving Aghor from the snake-poison serves at the level of ethical values, the *Ojha/Jotedar* conflict remains the privileged site of meaning while interpreting with the yardstick of socio-political studies. The honey/poison dialectic preceding and leading to the killing of Aghor and rising and ebbing of snake-poison in Aghor's body at Matla's bidding metaphorizes the dance of class war—the *Ojha/Jotedar* conflict. The ultimate resistance to the rising of Aghor's power proves fruitful to re-establish

the social order of human life. Through this resistance leading to Aghor's death, "Manoj Mitra creates an oppositional space of revolt—a revolt of different kind—another history" (Chaudhury 235). Utpal Dutt "interprets the play's end as 'proletarian humanism' that helps to establish the revolutionary spirit of human life—Badami having killed the Jotedar at the end of the play to establish the value of life" (qtd. in Mitra *Honey* 21).

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INA's Model of Inclusive Nationalism and Its Relevance in Contemporary India

Gh Hassan Wani

Abstract

India, the land of perennial wisdom remained British colony for a long period. She had to fight a strong struggle for her independence from the British rule. While fighting British rule, Indian intelligentsias since the beginning of freedom movement were much concerned about free India. They in this effort put forth different socio-politico-economic models, both utopians and practical about Independent Bharat. However, to find a perfect socio-political model suitable for diversified Indian society, eternally gifted with various regions and religions, cultures and sub-cultures, Varna's and castes, was a very difficult task. This concern grew more seriously during first half of 20th century. Fortunately, Azad Hind Fauj and its visionary leadership also devised and practiced some standard ideals of nationalism, unity and harmony. These ideals later evolved into pragmatic models of unity and harmony, thereby paving the way for independence. These models were not conceptual or utopian but practical; and practiced both in west and in east by true nationalists of Azad Hind Fauj. This piece of research will therefore, explore and analyze I.N.A.'s Model of Inclusive Nationalism and its relevance in contemporary India.

Keywords: Freedom Movement, Inclusive Nationalism, INA.

1. Introduction

Colonial India faced many challenges throughout the course of its vibrant journey but India stood always up against the challenges coming in its way. Different than earlier but a more crucial challenge in her history came from the British rule, which tried to destroy the very foundations of Indian civilization. Their process of socio-civilizational engineering conjoined with ruthless exploitation intensified more vigorously during first half of 20th century. British imperialists not only exploited, but also through their Machiavellian policies and ideological tools tried to divide Indian society on various grounds and change the structure of Indian society, with the intention to dismantle the very harmonious edifice of Indian civilization, for their imperial gains. Moreover, the world during first half of the 20th century was passing through its transforming phase and the politico-economic currents at the global level posed some serious challenges to world. For some time Indian intelligentsia particularly freedom fighters too got confused by these global currents. In these circumstances to keep India united and to win, freedom from foreign rule was a serious challenge for Indian intellectuals. However, in this period of chaos and confusion and divide and rule some nationalist intellectuals of Azad Hind Fauj rose to the occasion and saved the civilization from complete collapse. The visionary leadership of Azad Hind Fauj put forth some pragmatic models of nationalism, unity and harmony. These models experimented in both west and east by soldiers of Azad Hind Fauj, later became guiding principles for whole India during INA Trials. This piece of research therefore, will explore the INA's Pragmatic Models of Inclusive Nationalism.

2. Morphology of Indian Society

Unlike man a society or a nation is also a living entity; but only when all its social, cultural and civilizational components and psycho-mental traits work harmoniously and unitedly. India in spite of being a small world in itself with different cultures; religions, races,

languages, and regions, is a vibrant living entity that has lived thousands of years on the principle of harmony and unity. This unified harmonious socio-civilizational edifice of India rests on some basic pillars; composite culture, communal harmony, non-violence, brotherhood, morality and social values, whose cementing materials are mutual-trust, mutual-respect, adaptation, accommodation, cooperation, toleration, fraternity, egalitarianism and positive thought. Amit Kumar Sharma, an Indian anthropologist writes, “The cultural unity of Indian civilization is based on complementary, reciprocity and exchange between different groups”.¹ These ingrained elements of Indian civilization form base of Indian society and have always cemented Indians into a living nation. The harmony and unity in diversity is now the international hallmark of Indian Nation. According to Spengler, “each civilization constructs its own identity and has an organic passage of time”.² These two features developed by Indian society, helped India to keep up its vibrant journey and face all the odds coming in its way with time and space. It was this unity and harmony that won for India freedom from colonial rule and it must be this harmony and unity that would free India from all ills. Thus, not unity in uniformity but unity in diversity must be identity of India.

3. Azad Hind Fauj (1942-1945)

Azad Hind Fauj or Indian National Army a brainchild of Subash Chandra Bose was formed at two fronts. On western front, it was established in January 26, 1942 by Subash Chandra Bose, in Germany and on eastern front, INA was founded on February 17, 1942, under commandship of Mohan Singh, at the request of Major Fujiwara and Pritam Singh in Singapore. Azad Hind Fauj in east worked as an armed wing of Indian Independence League an organization working for freedom of India in Southeast Asia. Whereas, in west Azad Hind Fauj worked as an armed wing of Free Indian, a political organization coordinating freedom struggle from Europe.

¹ Sharma, Amit Kumar. *Elements of Indian Civilization: A Sociological Perspective*, Indian Anthropologist, Vol. 33, No. 1 (June, 2003) p. 80.

² Ibid. p, 72

Although, Indian National Army collapsed much before achieving its desired goal of independence, yet it changed the course of National Movement and took struggle to the doors of freedom. It became a symbol of national unity and a model of inclusive nationalism uniting almost all people and major political parties of India. Therefore, INA emerged as an immediate threat to British Raj and cause of its early withdrawal from India.³

On the one hand in the country there was a demand for Pakistan and on the other hand Hindus and Muslims showed a tremendous unity when the I.N.A prisoners were put on trial by the British Indian government. By putting three officers of INA belonging to three major Indian religions on trial, British were actually checking the unity of India, which they had seldom failed to break throughout the course of their rule over India. However, during this crucial period the INA sympathy did a cementing work for the united India, for it demonstrates a completely different trend of Hindu-Muslim-Sikh unity at a time when the British were dividing the nation using religion as a tool.

Fortunately, in this atmosphere of acute crisis and confusion, some pragmatic socio-political models accepted to all the communities of Indian society and a positive synthesis of both western modernism and eastern spiritualism came from the leadership of Azad Hind Fauj. These were not theoretical models or abstract ideals but pragmatic models, experimented both in west and in east, where they succeeded effectively. The acceptance of these harmonious socio-political models, by the Indians living abroad and their successful implementation is a sufficient proof that these are perfect models for free and future India.

4. INA's Models with special reference to 'INA's Model of Inclusive Nationalism'

Being the embodiment of unity, harmony, patriotism and pluralism; the models and ideals developed and practiced by Azad Hind Fauj are always relevant to India, owing to their compatibility to the basic traits and tenets of Indian society. Therefore, the re-adoption and

³ Bakshi, G. D. *Bose an Indian Samurai: Netaji and the INA: A Military Assessment*

reimplementation of these models and ideals is the need of the hour. Following are some of the important models developed by Azad Hind Fauj for free India: INA's Model of Inclusive Nationalism, INA's Pragmatic Model of Communal Harmony, Pragmatic Model of National Unification and Model of Social Egalitarianism. In this piece of research we will explore, analyze and discuss INA's Model of Inclusive Nationalism

5. INA's Model of Inclusive Nationalism

Nationalism is a broad concept; therefore, there comes various interpretations of nationalism depending upon time, space and circumstances. The concept of nationalism in India is of a different content and nature than that of European concept and even context. Indian concept of nationalism is well rooted in Indian socio-cultural ethos as well as an outcome of a unified reaction to foreign domination. Contrary to this, the European concept of nationalism is the byproduct of socio-political crisis and racism. Regarding the origin of nationalism in India, there appears two dominant narratives. One pan-Indianism which see the seeds of nationalism in India even before the coming of English people and second European product that says, it developed as a reaction to English imperialism. However, when one searches within the broad framework the roots of nationalism in India, the traces of its proto-forms are frequently available before Europeans. However, the concept of nationalism in its modern sense developed during 20th century.

The Indian concept of nationalism is more moral and spiritual than material. Ours nationalism is a genesis of our dynamic socio-civilizational values that have developed over thousands of years of peaceful co-existence and synthesis. Indian nationalism is deeply rooted in our social ethos and shared history. The seed of this nationalism were sown by our great ancestors; religious heads, social figures, kings and nobles and genuine intellectuals. It was nourished by our Sufi-Bhakti tradition and finally colored with the blood our great freedom fighters. Indian nationalism is neither jingoism nor political chauvinism. It is a

socially evolved process not a politically sponsored project. It is a noble thing not a marketable product. It is an honorable trait not a hallow slogan.

However, Indian nationalism has nowadays become a political brand. Beyond the curtain walls of nationalism, the markets of criminalization are being promoted which is contrary to the very concept of Indian nationalism. These acts and actors of criminalization would demolish the very edifice of Indian civilization. The destruction or defacing of the very forces of nationalism; shared history, secularism, adaptation, accommodation, tolerance, mutual-trust, communal harmony, democratic setup and symbols; history, architecture, historical cities and historical figures, of nationalism would subsequently paralyze the very socio-civilizational structure of India and hinder the positive progress of India.

INA Model of Inclusive Nationalism was based on the very ethics and ethos of Indian Civilization. This inclusive nationalism was the soul of Azad Hind Fauj. Subash Chandra Bose the ideologue of Azad Hind Fauj was a true nationalist and 'prince of patriots'.⁴ Bose's ideology and actions were not the result of any psycho-mental disorder nor was he a megalomaniac. He did not possess any of the evil traits often attributed to fascist leaders, such as racism, hostile aggression, obsessive hatred egoism, or delusions. He was an ardent patriot. His nationalism was socio-cultural, not racialist, moral not jingoistic, peaceful not vindictive, real not pseudo, genuine not fake spiritual not marketable. That is why "Bose made no differentiation between Hindus, Buddhists and Muslims."⁵ Rather "he succeeded in binding together the Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Tamils, and Punjabis or for that matter all communities in a melting pot, namely the Indian National Army."⁶ That army stood

⁴ *Harijan*, Feb. 24, 1946.

⁵ Muller, E and A. Bhattacharjee. *Subhas Chandra Bose and Indian Freedom Struggle*. New Delhi: Ashish Publishing House, 1985. p. 3.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 3.

for India first, India second and India last. His men took the solemn pledge that their loyalty to their religion, language or province would be subordinated to their loyalty to India”.⁷

Moreover, Bose’s radical nationalism was the outcome of useless political methodology of congress and deceitful policies of British rulers, both were big obstacles in the way of independence. His authoritarian outlook did not come from a drive for personal power but for independence of his motherland. He was over ambitious, and sincerely enjoyed the devotion of his followers; his obsession was not adulation or power, but rather freedom for his beloved Motherland, a goal for which he was willing to suffer and sacrifice, even at the cost of his life.

The core elements of this inclusive nationalism follow as below:

5.1 Unity

Unity is the strength of India. The old proverb that ‘union is strength’ is being beautifully experimented in India since decades. It is this union, which gave birth to unity in diversity; a unique feature of Indian civilization, rather a hallmark of Indian Nation. Azad Hind Fauj nourished this unification with their blood; hence became a symbol of national unification.

Dodwell Cooray, a journalist who led the I.N.A.'s broadcasting unit in Rangoon wrote about INA in a profile of Bose, “The Indian National Army comprising many castes and creeds of India was a unified force under Netaji Subash Chandra Bose. Hindu, Muslim and Christian ate at the same table. No religious differences were allowed to mar the unity of the members of the INA, and he forged a bond of oneness between all the members” of Azad Hind Fauj.⁸ The unity and harmony that Azad Hind Fauj achieved will be a limelight for the

⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 3-5.

⁸ Dodwell Cooray. *New Life*, September 18, 1987.

posterity and INA “will be a pattern and exemplar for all lovers of their country”.⁹ Thus, INA was a true symbol of unity and brotherhood both before and after the trials. The civil and military administration of Provisional Government of Free India worked under one command; that of Netaji, one banner; tricolor flag, and with one mission; freedom of India. The leadership of Azad Hind Fauj must be all-praised for this unity and harmony. Suniti Chatterjee credits Bose for making “the Hindu and the Muslim, the Sikh and the Christian, the native Indian and the Anglo-Indian, feel as brothers, as one Indian people, single and the indivisible”.¹⁰ Therefore, this model of national unification is the need of India for all times to come.

Gandhi while paying tribute to Bose's courage and devotion, six months after his death in an airplane crash on August 18, 1945, wrote, "The hypnotism of the Indian National Army has cast its spell upon us. Netaji's name is one to conjure with His patriotism is second to none. . . His bravery shines through all his actions. He aimed high and failed. But who has not failed.”¹¹ On another occasion, Gandhi eulogized: "Netaji will remain immortal for all time to come for his service to India.”¹²

5. 2 Communal Harmony

Harmony is the base of Indian nation upon which all the socio-civilizational¹³ infrastructure; social, cultural, religious, economic etc and superstructure; political, legal, judicial, ethical, value system etc rests. The bedrocks and cementing materials of this harmony are mutual-trust, cooperation, adaptation, tolerance, fraternity, mutual-respect, egalitarianism, shared-history and positive progressive thought. All these forces harmony have welded India into

⁹ The political philosophy of Subash Chandra Bose: Bengali Revolutionary Nationalist (1897-1945), Arkansas Academy of Science Proceedings, Vol. 16. 1962. p. 30.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 32.

¹¹ *Harijan*, Feb. 24, 1946. *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* (Ahmadabad: The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Navajivan Trust, 1972-78), Volume LXXXIII, p. 135.

¹² Talk with Deb Nath Das, Feb. 25, 1947. *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Volume LXXXVII, p. 19.

¹³ Civilization is an organized culture encompassing many communities, often on the scale of a nation.

one dynamic country. Therefore, any model or principle developed in conformity with the basic tenets of Indian society and satisfying the psycho-mental horizons of all the communities is always acclimatizable and acceptable in this multi-religious and multicultural country.

The models and socio-political doctrines put forth as well as experimented by the leadership of Azad Hind Fauj were devised in accordance with the fundamentals of Indian society. Bose the architect and guardian of Azad Hind Fauj was well rooted both in Indian tradition, which is based on harmony and synthesis, and modern European traditions, purely materialist but scientific. Bose and his companion INA's leadership knew Indian psyche and had felt the plus of Indian populace over the years. Therefore, their models and principles were well analyzed and thought experimented, hence acceptable to all the Indian communities living in Europe, Southeast Asia and India.

Subash Chandra Bose succeeded in finding the logic behind growing socio-religious division in India. He found that this is actually the conspiracy of colonial rulers and the division is artificial rather natural. Professor Suniti Chatterji praises Bose for proving that the "Hindu-Muslim communalism is an artificial creation, an incubus, of the British colonial divide and rule policy".¹⁴ This evil creation accompanied all the institutions, systems, ideologies and even reforms introduced by British rulers in India. Since, the Revolt of 1857, popularly known as 'First War of Independence' Britishers often used Machiavellian and ideological tools, such as policy of divide and rule, rather than military tools. This was because the Revolt of 1857 opened the eyes and minds of British rulers that their rule in India was in danger and if it has to sustain then the division of Indian society on various grounds is a prerequisite. Because during the revolt both Hindus and Muslims fought together and posed the first ever-greater challenge to Imperialist rule. Thus, this combined national struggle

¹⁴Bock, Robert. L. 'The Political Philosophy of Subash Chandra Bose, Bengali Revolutionary Nationalist, 1897-1945' Arkansas Academy of Science Proceedings, Vol. 16, 1962, p. 32.

forced the British rulers to think beyond politico-military solutions. Thus, as Suniti Chatterji says” pitting people alike in blood, language, culture, history, life and mind against each other because of the outer paraphernalia of formal religion”¹⁵, became agenda of British Indian Rulers in India.

Up to 1940’s this British sponsored Socio-political division had reached to its climax and the mainstream political parties of India were unable to prevent this division. Now the division had taken such an ugly shape, that communal riots were order of the day. The nation was in a state of chaos and the Indian social ethos was breaking down. Besides, the political stalemate between Congress and League was continuously growing towards an extreme extent. The efforts for Hindu-Muslim reapproach done by Bose under congress banner were either rejected or sabotaged by congress. To Bose there seemed no solution of communal problem under congress banner. He therefore, tried to solve this problem first under Forward Bloch platform and then as a supreme commander of Azad Hind Fauj and Chairman of Indian Independence League.

Netaji’s Azad Hind Fauj was a model army that worked on the principle of harmony, and whose only mission was to free India from the clutches of British rule and to be a model army for free India. There was a complete unity and harmony among the rank and file of Azad Hind Fauj. An officer of the INA says, “He (Bose) believed passionately, that all Indians irrespective of region they came from or the language they spoke or religious faith they practiced, were members of the same family”¹⁶. Even Bose “gave this belief practical shape and convinced all those who came in contact with him that unless this basic fact was not accepted without hesitation, there was no future for India”¹⁷. Bose was a champion of Hindu-Muslim unity and always stressed for mutual-respect towards other communities. He while appealing for Hindu-Muslim unity “asked the Hindus to bend over backwards, to

¹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 32.

¹⁶ *Netaji Subash Chandra Bose anti-British war and the Bhagvad Gita: A Postscript.* A.R. Secularatne, P. 177.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* P, 177.

respect the rights of the Muslims and pleaded for concentration over the most important task at hand; ‘the struggle for Indian freedom’¹⁸. Because Bose knew that if freedom from British rule had to be won, it needs a combined nationalist front consisting of people from all races, religions, regions and sexes. He was also well aware that Britisher’s would try to split this front using religion as their tool. Netaji therefore, deliberately avoided the use of religion for mobilization of his armies and common people, contrary to other nationalist leaders of India. Therefore, after the formation of Azad Hind Fauj “there however, is no evidence in the literature on Bose, that he did refer explicitly to the message of Gita in his speeches on the need for anti-British revolt”.¹⁹

While making the structural postmortem of INA, there was no division on the basis religion, race, caste or sex but “all the companies of the regiments of Indian National Army were mixed up with units of the Sikhs, Muslims, Rajputs, Jats, Garhwalas and Marathas. They all lived together, ate together, and so each considered other as his own brother-in-arms”. Hence, “all their loyalties to their religion or region, if any, were subordinate to their loyalty to india”. Therefore, Indian National Army was “not only a model army but a model citizenry”²⁰ as well.

Azad Hind Fauj was an ideologeme of harmony and a symbol of communal harmony, the very base of India’s socio-cultural edifice. Hence, the pragmatic model of communal harmony as advocated, practiced and nourished by INA with their blood, must be a torchbearer to the Indians forever and it is this uniqueness which makes INA and its models relevant in contemporary India as well as future India..

5.3 Tolerance.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* P, 179.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* P, 177.

²⁰ *Ibid.* pp, 178-179

Tolerance is the ability to endure or bear with patience the opinions, ideologies, beliefs, practices or behavior of others. It also implies lack of prejudice and bigotry as well as displaying an objective and unbiased attitude towards others. Impartiality, broad-mindedness and open-mindedness are the key elements of tolerance. It also is the quality of giving others the autonomy to preach and practice their socio-religious and cultural practices. Indian socio-cultural setup “accepts manifoldness of reality and tolerates plurality of viewpoints, behavior, customs and institutions”.²¹ Tolerance is thus, one of the important forces of unity and harmony. Azad Hind Fauj was standard-bearer of tolerance. The officers and soldiers of INA showed tolerance in every aspect of their daily affairs.

5.4 Inclusive approach.

An important feature of INA's growing strength was the principal of inclusivism and holism. Bose the architect of Azad Hind Fauj believed that all the Indians irrespective of their caste, creed, color, sex, region, religion, language and other affiliations are important players in the freedom struggle, because he knew that freedom could be achieved only through a united struggle. The INA leadership knew that ‘united we stand and divide we fall’. History also bears witness that whenever Indians acted unitedly we succeeded and when acted separately we failed, that is why Bose gave call ‘total mobilization for total war’. The inclusionary approach was backbone of INA's dynamic journey and peaceful existence. This cosmopolitan outlook transformed INA into a globally recognized army and the government formed by Netaji first internationally recognized government of free India. This perspective of inclusivism adopted by INA developed into concept of oneness; hence it transformed Azad Hind Fauj into a united force.

5.5 Social Egalitarianism

²¹ Sharma, Amit Kumar. *Elements of Indian Civilization: A Sociological Perspective*, Indian Anthropologist, Vol. 33, No. 1. June, 2003. P. 87.

Netaji envisioned when Britishers would be driven out of India through an armed struggle, a socio-political revolution would begin. This revolution would bring an end to the age-old caste system and traditional social hierarchy. Then this caste-ridden society would be replaced by an egalitarian, casteless and classless society based on socialist models. However, this process would require very careful guidance and tough hand, to prevent anarchy and chaos. Mrs. Kitty Kurti, a close German friend of Bose, thus revealed in her anecdotal memoir, that in 1933, Bose in meeting explained that, "Besides a plan of action which will lead up to the conquest of power, we shall require a program for the new state when it comes into existence in India. Nothing can be left to chance. The group of men and women who will assume the leadership of the fight with Great Britain will also have to take up the task of controlling, guiding and developing the new state and, through the state, the entire Indian people The task of these leaders will not be over till a new generation of men and women are educated and trained after the establishment of the new state and this new generation are able to take complete charge of their country's affairs".²²

Netaji also anticipated that authoritarian rule would not last beyond the period when social reconstruction was completed, and law and order were established... Bose aimed for nothing less than the formation of "a new India and a happy India on the basis of the eternal principles of liberty, democracy and socialism"²³

He emphasized that greater emphasis should be placed on social goals than on the needs or desires of individuals. Individual wishes, must be subordinated to the needs of the state, especially during the struggle for independence and the period of reconstruction immediately following liberation. Nonetheless, he was fully committed to upholding the rights of minority, intellectual, religious, cultural and racial groups. He believed for an "all-round freedom for the Indian people such as social, economic and political freedom," and ,

²² 61. Kitty Kurti, *Subhas Chandra Bose As I Knew Him* (1966), pp. 22-28

²³ *Ibid.* p, 29.

hoped to "wage a relentless war against bondage of every kind till the people can become really free." ²⁴

5.6 Women Emancipation

Unlike the German National Socialists and the Italian Fascists, who stressed the masculine in almost all spheres of social and political activity, Bose believed that women were the equal to men, and should therefore be likewise prepared to fight and sacrifice for India's liberation. Throughout the 1920's and 1930's, he had campaigned in India to bring women more fully into the life of the nation. After his return to Asia in 1943, he called on women to serve as soldiers in the Indian National Army. "When I express my confidence that you are today prepared to fight and suffer for the sake of your motherland," he told the women's section of the Independence League in July 1943, "I do not mean only to cajole you with empty words. I know the capabilities of our womanhood well. I can, therefore, say with certainty that there is no task which our women cannot undertake and no sacrifice and suffering which our women cannot undergo... To those who say that it will not be proper for our women to carry guns, my only request is that they look into the pages of our history. What brave deeds the Rani of Jhansi performed during the First War of Independence in 1857... Indians -- both common people and members of the British Indian army -- who are on the border areas of India, will, on seeing you march with guns on your shoulders, voluntarily come forward to receive the guns from you and carry on the struggle started by you."²⁵ A women's regiment, named Rani of Jhansi Regiment was formed in 1943, and its number came to about 1,000 women. While those less suited to combat duties were employed as nurses and in other supportive roles, the majority were trained as soldiers. When the INA attacked British forces from Burma in east India in mid-1944, the women of the Jhansi Regiment fought alongside the men, suffering equally heavy casualties. When the army was

²⁴ *Ibid.* p. 29.

²⁵ Speech to the women's section of the Indian Independence League, Singapore, July 12, 1943. Reference, "*Selected Speeches of Subhas Chandra Bose*", pp. 189-192.

forced to withdraw, the women were given no privileges. Along with the men, they marched for more than a thousand kilometers.²⁶

5.7 Mutual Trust

One of the cementing materials for this unity and harmony was mutual-trust. Bose through his magnetic speeches and selfless nationalism had developed among his followers such a deep sense of unity, communal harmony and true patriotism that they trusted on other fellow brethren more than their own-self. Even Bose himself trusted his commanders beyond limits. Thus, while traveling from Germany to Tokyo he was accompanied by Abid Hassan Safrani and at the time of his alleged death, he had Colonel Habih-ur-Rehman. All his comrades followed this tradition of trust set forth by Bose and all his true lovers must fall this tradition even now.

5.8 Sacrifice

A true sacrifice means to offer as a gift everything a person possesses. The heroes of Azad Hind Fauj offered theirs everything, family, country, jobs and even the dearest and most valuable thing, the life. According to American Heritage Dictionary, sacrifice means ‘To forfeit something for something else considered to have a greater value’. Thus, sacrifice does not mean ‘giving up something for nothing’ but sacrifice means giving up everything for something else, we consider more important. In this context, the soldiers of Azad Hind Fauj considered freedom of motherland more worthy than all the things, which they voluntarily sacrificed, encompassing them even their lives. Therefore, this sacrifice cult developed by Azad Hind Fauj, became an exemplar for Independent Bharat.

6. Conclusion.

India is one of the few civilizations that have survived the shocks, clashes and collisions of time and space and forces of nature and history. It is because Indian society and

²⁶ S. K. Bose, ed., *A Beacon Across Asia* (1973) pp ,182, 219.

civilization is well rooted in humanism, cosmopolitanism, moralism, universalism, internationalism, pluralism and unity in diversity. The basis pillars of the inclusive nationalism, harmonious and unified socio-civilization edifice are; communal harmony, composite culture, syncretism, non-violence, common goodwill, morality and social values and its cementing materials are mutual-trust, accommodation, cooperation, adaptation, toleration, fraternity, mutual-respect, egalitarianism and positive progressive thought. Nevertheless, these very forces and symbols of Indian civilization are being engineered and demolished for fulfilling the vested political and other interested. Therefore, the need of the time is to save rather promote this basic structure of Indian society. Thus, exploring the models and ideals of Azad Hind Fauj especially INA's Model of Inclusive Nationalism is an act of this effort.

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‘Ode on the Lungi’: Kaiser Haq’s Portrayal of “the Subaltern Speaking”

Safi Ullah

Abstract

Ode on the Lungi is the highly studied and mostly appreciated poem of Kaiser Haq, the most eminent Bangladeshi poet writing in English. He considers Lungi, “ethnic attire,” as the symbol of subaltern and gives them voice to speak aloud their sufferings and the democratic hypocrisy they undergo. Gayatri Chakravarti Spivak suspects about whether the subaltern can speak or not and Arudhati Roy comments that the subaltern either cannot speak or we carefully and consciously neglect their speaking. What we get reading the poem is that Kaiser Haq challenges these comments of Spivak and Roy and cultural consciousness, as Franz Fanon defines the concept of national consciousness. *Ode on the Lungi* will be interpreted here in the light of the concept of subaltern and their urge for democratic equal rights. This paper is concerned with how Kaiser Haq blends the subaltern and their carefully unheard voices to the world and world people and questions the Father of American democracy about the validity and utility of democratic ideal regarding cloths referring to sartorial equality. This paper will also unearth the cultural and political differences between the East and the West as Haq shows using the kilt and lungi. In short, the prime concern of the paper is to analyze the voicing of the subaltern, especially Asian and more specifically Bangladeshi subaltern including women as employed in *Ode on the Lungi*.

Keywords: subaltern, orientalism, cultural consciousness, post-colonialism, feminism.

Introduction

Ode on the Lungi is a poem appreciating the lungi wearing people referring to the subaltern and marginalized people (Chowdhury). Lungi, though an “ethnic attire” of common people, claims for equal dignity and this is why the speaker of the poem questions Walt Whitman, the most influential American poet who wrote on democracy and American ideals, and about the existing hypocrisy of democratic ideals. This attire also represents the subaltern and their presence in the global era. This poem is regarded as a postcolonial response against the autocratic, hierarchical and superior entity that is the West, more specifically the Occident. This paper will analyze how Kaiser Haq employs his idea of promoting the status of the subaltern. He also uses the upside down idea that is carnivalesque. He equates lungi and the lungi wearing people with other people of the world influenced by the democratic ideals but he finds hypocrisy in this ideal. Even nothing can resist him from proclaiming the equal rights of human being. Another issue is that Haq articulates the voice of the subaltern in the form of a lungi for global acceptance (Chowdhury).

Subalternity, song of myself and hypocrisy of democracy

Subaltern is mainly derived from Marxist cultural critic Antonio Gramsci and it generally identifies those people or social groups who are outside the hegemonic power structures of the West and its colonies and therefore are excluded socially, politically, economically and geographically from a society’s center-stage. In addition, a group of South Asian historians who formed the subaltern studies group in the late 1970s and early 1980s started writing history from below, not from the perspective of the colonizer but from the perspective of the colonized. Here in *Ode on the Lungi*, Kaiser Haq is writing the history of the subaltern from their own perspective. The concept of subalternity occupies a great space throughout the poem titled “Ode on the Lungi”.

Walt Whitman begins ‘Song of Myself’, a poem included in *Leaves of Grass* (1855), “I celebrate myself, and sing myself” (760). This celebration signifies democratic ideals and freedom to do anything legal and express own feelings. If this is true, everyone can wear anything they wish. But unfortunately it does not work if the case is for subaltern Eastern people. Here it is necessary to identify the term subaltern. *Postcolonial Studies* (2013) defines, “Subaltern, meaning ‘of inferior rank’, is a term adopted by Antonio Gramsci (1930-2) to refer to those groups in society who are subject to the hegemony of the ruling class” (244). The anthology adds, “Subaltern classes may include peasants, workers and the groups denied access to ‘hegemonic power’” (244). Now the definition demands a definition of hegemony. Antonio Gramsci writes in ‘Hegemony’ (673) that hegemony is the power of the ruling class to convince other classes that their interests are the interests of all. In other word, hegemony signifies cultural domination. Cultural domination is dominant in subalternity and in cloths. In cultural domination, some cloths are considered better than other. In *Ode on the Lungi*, the speaker of the poem clearly claims that “some obviously/ are more equal than others” (23-24). Lungi is dominated by kilt or some other dresses. When the speaker talks of democracy with Walt Whitman, “laureate of democracy” (50) about a White House appointment, Mr. Walt can enter “affected a kilt— / but a lungi? No way.” (52-54). Though kilt is a dress resembling lungi, kilt is allowed in the Whitehouse but not lungi. This inequality questioned: “Is it a clash of civilizations?” (57).

Kaiser Haq is said to be the real “ambassador of Bangladeshi culture” who proudly reveals his origin and rationally tries to brand his country (Hossain 11). In addition, he “defends the misrepresentation of lifestyles and ideas of the East by the West and *Ode on the Lungi* is an attempt of his defense” (Munzerin Mohiuddin 2).

Sartorial Equality, Subalternity and Kaiser Haq's 'Ode on the Lungi'

The subalterns are supposed not to speak. Even if they speak, they are preferably unheard or carefully neglected. "Subaltern classes may include peasants, workers and other groups denied access to hegemonic power" (Ashcroft's *Postcolonial Studies: The Key Concepts* 244). In postcolonial studies, subaltern are the Orient. To simplify, they are the colonized people and especially they belong to the East. Common people of the Eastern world are addressed here as the subaltern. Kaiser Haq writes in *Ode on the Lungi* that "It's the subaltern speaking" (185). Lungi is the dress of the working class of Bangladesh. So this dress signifies the lungi wearing people. How lungi is viewed is another crucial question that is not denied by the poet. The reaction of Beau Brummel against coat was "What is this thing?" (*Ode* 115) The approach was very neglecting. Kaiser Haq could understand that lungi will be regarded in this way to the father of democracy, Walt Whitman. So he himself raises the questions and gives a scientific description of this attire. Finally, the speaker of the poem would like to promote the lungi wearing people. That is why he urges to the US chief to attend the office with lungi and proclaims that "Grandpa Walt, I celebrate my lungi/ and sing my lungi/ and what I wear/ you shall wear..." (*Ode* 105-108) The Western, the colonizer, insisted to follow them. Now, this postcolonial response of a colonized man, who is talking with the same tone and asks them to follow his footprint, ensures the possibility of sartorial equality, which indicates the equal rights of the colonized world and its people. This footprint is to be followed by the colonized. This poem expresses a growing consciousness and fight against the gap between 'us' and 'them' (Hossain, 2013). Now lungi wearing people are none whom the Occident can demean. Thus subaltern people are dignified with their due respect and humane quality in *Ode on the Lungi*.

Kaiser Haq is a Bangladeshi poet who also loves to wear lungi. He represents this community. He expresses his sorrows while Lungi was banned in Gulshan, an aristocratic area of Dhaka, Bangladesh. He said, "I discovered that the Baridhara society is not alone among

public bodies in its antipathy to the public use of the lungi” (Dhaka Tribune, April 18, 2013). Haq commented earlier that this was “the invasion of sartorial inequality” (Hossain 2). All these employ Kaiser Haq’s concern for the subaltern and the unvoiced people.

Ode on the Lungi is the symbolic representation of the subaltern. Kaiser Haq utters that lungi is the subaltern speaking. To elaborate the idea, the lungi wearing people are promoted here in the guise of lungi. How Bew Brummel sneers at this ethnic attire and how the son of Kaiser Haq’s cousin becomes ashamed of lungi are in no way different from how the Orient are looked down upon and how common people of the East are treated throughout the world. The speaker of the poem raises his voice for the equality of all as to employ democratic ideals but he found the clash of civilization that also refers to the target of protest. It “is unquestionably a postcolonial resistance poem to the imperialist cultural hegemony” (Hossain 2). Thus this poem takes the voice of the subaltern.

Kilt vs lungi and Orientalism

The speaker of *Ode on the Lungi* comments that “the kilt is with ‘us’/ but the lungi is with ‘them’” (59-60). Here the words ‘us’ and ‘them’ are in inverted commas as they refer to the idea of Edward W. Said (1978). He has defined the occident and the orient with these two terms. The occident stands for the colonizers and the Western while the Orient stands for the Asian and the African. In a colony, the colonized are the marginalized. It implies them even culturally and politically. Said writes in *Orientalism* that “the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period” (25). Here the lungi wearing ‘them’ is the native people signifying the marginalized and the subaltern people. As the Westerner wear kilt, it is a cultured dress but lungi is an ethnic attire as it is worn by the subaltern.

Kilt vs Lungi signify the West vs the East as kilt is the attire of the Western while lungi is the attire of the Eastern. Kilt is an attire resembling lungi. People of the West are accustomed

to wearing kilt. This is a part of Eurocentric tradition. On the other hand, lungi is worn by common people, especially by the working class. According to Eurocentric idea, dresses that do not belong to the West are inferior and therefore lungi is inferior dress. But Kaiser Haq distinguishes this discriminatory attitude of the world. He has given an example of one of his cousins who lives in America. His cousin wears lungi after he returns from office but “his son grew ashamed/ of dad and started hiding/ the ‘ridiculous ethnic attire’. (*Ode* 86-88)” Here the phrase ‘ridiculous ethnic attire’ has been under quotation mark since it implies something else. Thus, *Ode on the Lungi* “projects the ... picture of Eurocentric hegemony in private spaces” (Afroz and Yeasmin 52).

Lungi activist as the unvoiced majority

When can a dress be ethnic attire? Is it the answer that it is worn by a very few people or only by a tribe? Kaiser Haq answers it in the poem very sarcastically that “there are more people in lungis/ than the population/ of Europe and the USA” (*Ode* 44-46). Who use this dress? He also answers it saying “Hundreds of millions/ of men and women, / from the Pacific to Africa/ wear lungi” (*Ode* 32-35). So it is used in several continents and by thousands and millions of people. Normally women are regarded as the doubly subaltern as they are firstly subaltern to the highest authority and then to his male counterpart. Symbol of lungi does not exclude the women from the mainstream. Rather they also wear lungi; they are also marginalized culturally and sartorially. Here the form of lungi is the same but the name is different on the basis of sex and country. “Sarong, munda, htamain, saaram/ pinon, ma’awaiis, kitenge, kanga, kaiki,/ or the variant dhoti” (*Ode* 37-39), all of the dresses mentioned here are lungi, at least in the form of lungi. These dresses are used not only indoor but also outdoor. So how can this lungi be ethnic attire? No answer can be given as Orientalism deals with the idea of the Occident about the Orient. The occident claim themselves culturally superior to the Orient, so being the attire of the Orient, lungi is a low quality dress though in form it resembles kilt, *their* dress. So, Kaiser

Haq portrays lungi in such a way where hegemony cannot defeat lungi as a low quality dress. Thus Mr. Haq speaks for lungi wearing people.

Haq is very brokenhearted with the existing situation. He writes, “Something needs to be done” (*Ode* 92). He does not mention his inabilities as stated in Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot* (1953) and does not say that “Nothing to be done” (41). Rather he is eager to do something to eliminate the discrimination. Kaiser Haq declares:

The next time someone insinuates

that I live in an Ivory Tower

I’ll proudly proclaim

I AM A LUNGI ACTIVIST. (*Ode* 95-98)

He does not stop by only declaring but insists on organizing an international program on lungi. He writes, “Friends and fellow lungi lovers, / let us organize lungi parties and lungi parades,/ let us lobby Hallmark and Archies/ to introduce an international Lungi day.” (*Ode* 99-102) The urge and declaration for organizing an international lungi day symbolize the dignity of lungi as well as the dignity of the subaltern. He is well aware of the ridiculous attitude of the Western. Despite this, he does not resist himself from proclaiming the equal dignity for lungi as in this democratic world; every cloth should have equal rights. This upholding of lungi is to uphold the lungi wearing people. He denies, more specifically challenges the sartorial hegemony that pervades our lives by dignifying lungi and the marginalized people.

In this article, Walt Whitman is relevant in almost everywhere as the speaker of the poem is addressing him. The Father of American Democracy writes in ‘Song of Myself, “I celebrate myself and sing myself” (1). Haq connotes to Walt Whitman, “I celebrate my lungi/ and sing my lungi/ and what I wear/ you shall wear” (*Ode* 105-108). Here the concept of ‘myself’ refers to the concept of lungi wearing people. ‘Myself’ is equal to lungi to Kaiser Haq. Here it is the relevant to note that lungi wearing people are akin to ‘myself’. Haq belongs to

this group. He is not declaring the freedom of his own self but the freedom and equal rights and dignity for his own people. Here he gives no chance of looking down upon the downtrodden. If the ideals of democracy prevail in the world, everyone is bound to listen to others. Here in the poem Haq invites Walt Whitman to wear lungi as Haq and his people wear lungi. This invitation also signifies the confrontation and upholding of the downtrodden and thus Kaiser Haq makes the subaltern people speak.

Symbol of lungi as “the subaltern speaking”

Lungi is a “symbol of global left-outs”. After explaining lungi and its utility scientifically, Kaiser Haq says that lungi is “an emblem of egalitarianism,/ symbol of global left-outs.” (*Ode* 182-183) The word “left-outs” signifies the excluded people. It also refers to the downtrodden and subaltern that is systematically excluded from the mainstream by the elite, by the “us” and by the Western. The left-outs are speaking for their own dignity. He clarifies any sort of ambiguity and says that “it’s the subaltern speaking” (*Ode* 185). This comment eliminates all types of ambiguities regarding the interpretation of *Ode on the Lungi*.

Conclusion

To conclude, *Ode on the Lungi* is connotatively ode on the subaltern, ode on the downtrodden and ode on the marginalized people. These marginalized people are not silent in this poem. Rather they are declaring their equality with other people. The lungi wearing people are not to be neglected as in this democratic world; they also possess the same dignity. In short, Kaiser Haq successfully portrays the equal dignity and strong voice of the subaltern in *Ode on the Lungi*. He personifies lungi in this poem so that he can glorify the lungi wearing people and can represent them with their own identity.

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Pride and Prejudice and Fifty Shades of Grey

Wealthy Heroes and Smitten Heroines

Shahnaz Ameer

Abstract

Wealth or material assets play a vital role in a post-industrial society. Literature and culture have never failed to depict this change in society. Both Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and E. L. James's *Fifty Shades of Grey* successfully explore the role of material assets in making a man desirable. In *Pride and Prejudice*, Darcy—"selfish and overbearing"—resembles Grey, who is also "selfish" and "dominant." In keeping with the genteel tradition of the nineteenth century, Darcy's courtship of Elizabeth is "gentlemanly" till the very end of the novel as he woos her through a subtle show of his wealth. On the other hand, Grey, displays no such restraint while courting Anastasia; in fact, he even threatens her. However, both Elizabeth and Anastasia ignore the follies present in Darcy and Grey respectively. Money plays a pivotal role in the development of the plots of the two novels. Both Darcy and Grey who are unattainable, rich bachelors of their times, make Elizabeth and Anastasia develop a passion for them, with their behaviour, power and assets. This paper aims to evaluate the role of the different forms of capital, as classified by Pierre Bourdieu and argues that other than the rich male protagonists' dynamic characters, the capital they possess enables them to woo these two women. In addition, this paper will also argue that E. L. James shaped the character of Grey in such a way that Grey appears to be the modern Darcy.

Keywords: ISA, objectified capital, money, embodied capital.

Introduction:

Pride and Prejudice is Jane Austen's second novel that first graced the stands in 1813. The story revolves around poor damsels and rich eligible bachelors. Darcy, a wealthy, young gentleman pursues penniless Elizabeth by the virtue of his fortune. *Fifty Shades of Grey*, on the other hand, is a 21st century erotic romance novel by British author E. L. James which became the best-selling book in Britain, surpassing *Harry Potter* and *Deathly Hallows*. With the sale of more than 125 million copies of Fifty Shades trilogy worldwide, the adaptation of the novel fetched \$500 million at the global box office. The story charts a sadomasochistic relationship of a college graduate Anastasia Steele and a young business magnate Christian Grey. *Pride and Prejudice* seems to have been rewritten into *Fifty Shades of Grey* after almost two centuries. A touch of erotica to an otherwise old classic ushers the novel into a new age and makes it more palatable to the masses. The backdrops for the two novels are similar where wealth helps male protagonists impress women.

The female protagonists, Elizabeth and Anastasia, are poor women who do not have financial stability. This crisis can be resolved by marrying a rich man. Similarly, Darcy and Grey use their rich attributes to impress these women. The stories of the novels are similar with some additional sections in the latter one. As Claire Siesmaszkiewicz, the founder of Total-E-Bound Publishing declared, after the phenomenal success of *Fifty Shades of Grey*, the classical prose was kept original rather some "missing scenes [were added] for the readers to enjoy". Moreover, Martin Amis, a British novelist expressed a desire to "learn more about the details of the relationship between Elizabeth and Darcy" through *Fifty Shades of Grey*. Therefore it seems *Fifty Shades of Grey* is the classic narrative, but, with a twist.

Protagonists in the selected novels:

Both Elizabeth and Anastasia are impoverished characters in the novel. Elizabeth is one of the five daughters of Mr and Mrs Bennet, who is pressed by circumstances to attain economic stability through marriage. She has to use her wit over emotions throughout the novel. Likewise, Anastasia is a poor college student whose biological father died after her birth and her mother got married for the fourth time. Anastasia lives with her rich friend, Katherine Kavanagh, and works part-time in a hardware store at Clayton. It is evident that the financial conditions of both the female protagonists are quite questionable. The financial crisis of the female protagonists is to be resolved by rich bachelors, Darcy and Grey.

Althusser's Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) can be used to analyse the situation in a better way, where institutions propagate ideologies and values, which benefit a particular class of people. Most parents at that time wanted to marry their daughters off to wealthy men. The girls, similarly, giving in to the ideology, would grow affinity towards rich bachelors. Elizabeth's mother wants Lizzy to marry Mr Collins, the future heir to Longbourn, who has a good house and sufficient income. However, according to Lizzy, "Collins is a conceited, pompous, narrow-minded, silly man" (115). At the same time, she is enthralled by Wickham, who is described as the one having, "best part of beauty, a fine countenance, a good figure, and very pleasing address" (63). Elizabeth falls in love with Wickham's charisma, but as Mrs Gardiner warns Elizabeth of his poor monetary condition, she restricts her emotions and assures her aunt that she would do her best, which implies she is not a kind of girl who would settle for less, and therefore not with a man who has no financial status in the society. She also grows attachment for Colonel Fitzwilliam, who, nevertheless draws a financial barrier between them. In the end, Darcy's handsome and rich features outshine others.

Similarly, Anastasia has other men in her life as well. One of them is José Rodriguez, an engineering student at WSU who is "pretty hot" for Anastasia with his tall figure,

“shoulders”, “muscles”, “tanned skin”, dark hair” and “burning dark eyes” (24). However, he fails to impress Anastasia the way rich Grey does. Ana also seems to be interested in Ethan, her friend’s brother who is rich and “beautiful” (241). Ethan’s rich attributes never fail to attract Anastasia. Nevertheless, Grey was the richest of them all and thus the best pick for Ana. This can also be analysed by Althusser’s concept of ISA (1971), where the already formed ideals of the society like rich being the most preferred ones, dominates Ana’s mind. Both Elizabeth and Anastasia display their patience and wait for the richest suitor to appear.

In contrast to the poor heroines, the male protagonists are wealthy. Darcy is a fine, tall, handsome person, with an income of £10,000 a year, and owner of a large estate, Pemberley, situated in Derbyshire, England. His manners make him unpopular, as he is perceived as “proudest,” inconsiderate, arrogant and “most disagreeable man in the world”. (12). Similarly, Grey is an introvert and unsocial person like him. He is a proud, twenty-seven-year-old, mega-successful, self-made billionaire and for Ana “he’s the epitome of male beauty” (25). Grey leads a BDSM (Bondage and Discipline, Dominance and Submission, Sadism and Masochism) lifestyle. Anastasia, the sixteenth woman on which Grey plays the game of domination and submission, describes him as “control freak” which she mentions twenty times in the text. This idea relates very much to the concept of Gramsci’s Hegemony (1971) where one exerts power over the other, nevertheless after having the consent (Grey does not perform any act without Ana’s consent).

The male protagonists of the novels are not only similar because of their monetary worth, but both of them initially struggle with their feelings for these ladies. However, they fail miserably and Darcy ends up in changing his nature slightly and Grey immensely to woo them. Darcy could not help falling in love with an average looking girl from Longbourn. In a similar way, Grey fights his nature for a girl who bewitched him in an interview. It is evident from both the texts that pursuing women is not a difficult task for the possessors of money. Darcy

and Grey used their wit and certain strategies to win their mademoiselles, which is discussed in the next section.

Pierre Bourdieu's different forms of cultural capital to the rescue:

After his first rejection, Darcy steps wisely to persuade Elizabeth. Unlike Collins, who transfers the proposal to Charlotte, Darcy tries to impress her smartly. First of all, he writes a letter to soften her feelings for him. At this point, Elizabeth's character shows a development, but she has not fallen for him yet. Later on, Darcy's property and money take over her feelings when she pays a visit to Darcy's estate, Pemberley.

Pierre Bourdieu (1986) talks about different forms of cultural capital in his essay, "The Forms of Capital." Possession of such types of capital plays a key role in the men's journey of seeking the hands of their desired damsels. Darcy uses three such cultural capitals, namely, institutionalized, economic and social capital. Grey, similarly used institutionalized, objectified and embodiment of capital to meet his purpose.

Pemberley is the "institutionalized capital" of Darcy, which allures Elizabeth who is "delighted" to see the "large, handsome stone building" and feels that "to be the mistress of Pemberley would be something" (201). After viewing the handsome building, its "large, well proportioned...lofty and handsome rooms," furniture and natural beauty of the place she thinks,

And of this place... I might have been mistress. With these rooms I might now have been familiarly acquainted! Instead of viewing them as a stranger, I might have rejoiced in them as my own, and welcomed to them as visitors my uncle and aunt. (201)

Later on, she admits on Jane's inquiry that she "must date it from my [her] first seeing his beautiful grounds at Pemberley" (301). Therefore, Pemberley was the love at first sight, if not Darcy. This is when Elizabeth regrets rejecting the proposal of the man who owns

Pemberley, and Darcy's chase takes on a smoother road after this episode. Pemberley creates a paralyzing effect on Elizabeth as Walter Scott (1815) claims that "[Elizabeth] does not perceive that she has done a foolish thing until she accidentally visits a very handsome seat and grounds belonging to her admirer" (155).

Moreover, Darcy also uses his economic capital (a form of capital discussed by Pierre Bourdieu), which is directly transferable to money. On that very day of visiting Pemberley, she meets Darcy accidentally, who introduces her to his sister Georgiana and informs her of Bingley's coming, thus strategically manipulating Elizabeth, who is amazed at the marked change in his behaviour. Darcy was determined to show her the "gentlemanlike" behaviour for which she had criticized him. Once the news of Lydia and Wickham's elopement arrives, Darcy uses his "economic capital" to help with the situation. Darcy, seeing it as an opportunity saves Lydia's dignity by bribing Wickham to marry her. It is hinted that Darcy nearly spends his yearly income to help secure Bennet's nobility, which he, of course, does not carry out without any underlying motif. Furthermore, the situation itself demanded something in exchange for that huge favour, according to the norms of that society, again bringing in Althusser's 'Ideological Status Apparatus', where an expected exchange would be of common understanding. Therefore, Darcy makes Elizabeth indebted to him, and she would, of course, be happy to pay for this service.

"Social capital" is another capital which Darcy utilizes to play his last card. Darcy supplies the final piece of the puzzle by bringing a reconciliation of Jane and Bingley at Longbourn, while keeping Elizabeth lingering in thoughts if he still had some feelings left for her. Darcy is wealthier than Bingley; Bingley highly appreciates him and listens to his every opinion. Such type of dependency would not have been there without his wealth; thus money becomes a "social power," in this case, making a network of relationship which proves

beneficial in times of need like these. However, it also implies that Darcy used Bingley for his own purpose.

The postlude of the novel comes after Darcy mentions his “affections and wishes are unchanged” (373), once he realizes that Elizabeth would not refuse him. The novel ends with the wedding of Darcy and Elizabeth. His wealth hypnotizes Elizabeth during her visit to Pemberley, he saves Lydia’s honor and influences Bingley. Undoubtedly, her emotional evolution has direct relevance to Darcy’s institutionalized, economic and social capital.

In the other novel, Anastasia is born submissive, which Grey apprehends in their first meeting when she stumbles in his office. The hero appears to be a handsome and rich young man to the outside world, while his sadist tendencies are hidden from the world. He is “not a hearts and flowers kind of man” (72). So, she does not want to make any romance with him. Christian performs all sort of abusive things, as he is only interested in a dominant-submissive relationship with women. Nevertheless, Ana agrees to his terms of submission, and here too, like Darcy, Grey uses his capital to draw Ana towards himself.

Sometimes Ana seems to be directly persuaded by Grey’s wealth and materials. Wealth plays a significant role as the “institutionalized” state of the cultural capital. Anastasia is “paralyzed by the view” (5) of the “huge twenty-story office building” (4) when she first meets Grey. Even his security men, blonde office workers are “far more smartly dressed” (5) than her. Ana is in love with his office, furniture and paintings; for her, even the wine “glasses are rich” (94). Unlike Darcy, Grey wants to seduce Ana from their first meeting. Despite his arrogant and rude character, he shows Ana his office, offers her a job as an intern in his company and helps her to wear her jacket, with the hands which made billions. Moreover, he cancels his other meeting for Ana and hints that he would like to meet her again, which, Ana though cannot distinguish as a “challenge” or “threat” (15). These images recur in her mind,

and Grey's office building has the same effect on Anastasia as Pemberley has on Elizabeth, and this was just the first meeting.

Besides, "objectified capital" which is defined by Pierre Bourdieu (1986) as the transfer of capital to material objects, keeps Ana attached to Grey and her affections grow with time. One meal of oysters, a jacket, a car, and first-class plane tickets—is enough to make her feel that she needs him. Again, his rich grey flannel pants and a white linen shirt is enough to tantalize her. Grey showers Ana with gifts like books, laptop, blackberry and car and makes sure she does not lose interest in him. The materials objects and gifts which Ana keeps receiving for Grey are one of the reasons she remains with him.

The last form of capital which helps Grey seduce Ana is "embodiment capital" of Grey, which according to Bourdieu (1986) is the conversion of external wealth into an integral part of a person, because of which Grey develops a magnetic personality. Anastasia is attracted to the dynamic personality and elegant manners of Grey and ignores his sadistic behaviour. Grey is embodied with extraordinary skills, as he has excelled as a pilot and can fly his personal helicopter, Charlie Tango. He is a "mega-successful," (9) muscular man who has used his capital in every possible way. Christian's habits, physique and power were developed only because he was rich. A poor man would not have been able to develop them. His personality and intelligence have direct relevance to his wealth. Furthermore, Grey makes sure that she does not leave him. He makes her feel good about herself by calling her beautiful and leads him to the "Red Room of Pain". Ana ignores Grey's constant humiliations and threats. She knows how "demeaning and scary" (274) spanking is, as a punishment for rolling her eyes over Grey. She accepts his tortures willingly even though she has never been hit in her life before. The indentation around her hands feels good to her. Nevertheless, Grey uses his wit and overpowers her, so she cannot get rid of him easily. Furthermore, he introduces her to his parents and meets her parents as well to somewhat secure their relationship. This intelligence

of Grey is also a form of “embodied capital”, which developed over the years through his education, training and the environment, he was provided with to develop his skills. Thus, Anastasia’s attraction towards Grey is a result of his rich attributes. Wealth plays a significant role in helping Christian Grey seduce Anastasia.

Although in her subconsciousness, Anastasia knows that she is merely a “kinky sex slave” (126) and a “toy” (354) for Grey, she accepts his punishments for a long time, forgetting her dignity and self-esteem. It is evident that Grey’s institutionalized, objectified and embodiment capital allure Anastasia to the fullest, and he requires not to be on pins and needles like Darcy.

Conclusion:

Therefore, it seems *Fifty Shades of Grey* has evolved from *Pride and Prejudice*. In both the novels money plays a pivotal role for the heroes in convincing the heroines of the novel. Darcy is an antecedent of Grey, though the latter is smarter and quick to action, and both showcase and use their wealth in different forms (Bourdieu) to fulfill their ambitions. Similarly, Anastasia is the successor to Elizabeth, who is more avaricious and less conscious of her self- respect. In conclusion, the classics maintained the culture of its time while the modified erotica came up with some bold and new scenes, making it more agreeable to the preferences of the modern readers.

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Who Can Decorate Your Mind?

Suman Pramanik

Kenny Rogers's sang "And you decorated my life/ Created a world" was though meant for a single person, probably a lady-love; the lines can make you think that one's life is decorated by others. When people fall in love, they make such overstatement by giving all credits to their lovers but if you are not in that situation you should consider the fact that your life is decorated not only by a single person but many others who are directly or indirectly involved with you. At any rate, the song expresses how the mind becomes pure and effulgent, how it brings joy in life and how a man after being love-stricken could realize that his life has been decorated (shaped) by his lady-love. It is the mind machine that exerts the man to claim his life to be worthwhile, a decorated one. But I am not interested about how one's life is decorated or when one can claim one's life to be worthwhile or an idealistic one rather I enquire about the architects of your minds, the people who actually help you decorate your minds. Having a penetration in thought, I took an impromptu decision to write on it. I am not a psychologist, not even a neurobiologist; I hardly dare to read your mind but I can call your attention to think about the question which I have raised in the title of this essay.

The word 'decorate' is used as a signifier to express different 'workings' of mind. Indeed, this term can be applied to communicate with certain emotions and feelings that seem incomprehensible. However, in an attempt to give answer to the question which I drew up in the title, you would start naming people like your parents, teachers; great people or eminent personalities as the architects of your mind. No doubt that these people have great contribution to develop your mind but have you ever thought that the people whom you often mention are

also allowed by you to decorate your mind because you like them for certain reasons. So, the question is whom do you allow to decorate your mind?

You hardly admit the fact that your mind is also decorated for who you should ignore or even dislike. The phrase ‘decoration of mind’ is not necessarily conceived with a positive connotation; it rather exhibits the whole interior of your mind, both the positive and negative emotions. Many people who you think are ignorable because they cannot earn popularity, respect or recognition by others. In this context I can refer Sigmund Freud “It is impossible to escape the impression that people commonly use false standards of measurement – that they seek power, success and wealth for themselves and admire them in others, and that they underestimate what is of true value in life.” If you are preoccupied with an oligarchic mind set, then how fairly your mind is decorated?

Being Indian you must be familiar with the hijras, the indigenous alternative sexual people of India but you do not pay attention to them because they are not socially empowered. The lives of the hijras came to our knowledge only after the publication of a few autobiographies written by them but how many of you read those books to decorate (educate) your mind. Without even reading those books, you devalue them because you have no empathy for these people. In the field of humanities especially students of English literature are privileged to be introduced with different people/ characters of different societies. The English Department of Jadavpur University has recently decided to make a case study on Suchitra, a transgender teacher working in a private school of Kolkata. The purpose is for students to develop the ability to understand the sentiments and feelings of the marginalized and get them aware of unequal distribution of gender and power. Suchitra was given a chance to narrate some of the stories of her life describing her struggles, sexual assaults, exploitation and injustice. Her lecture could decorate (effect on) the minds of the students so powerfully that many had tears in their eyes after listening to her. Nilanjana Deb, a faculty member says “Most of our students

in the English department are of the elite category, who have very little idea of the lives of the marginalised, like transgender persons...We were woken up from our slumber with a jolt by Suchitra.” From her statement it can be said that the minds of students are class-fixed and therefore they could not imagine that a marginalized person or someone of relatively lower class can also decorate their mind. They could hardly acknowledge these people until their teachers get them acquainted with Suchitra. But the students who are so called elitists are born and brought up in India and they must have seen the transgender people on streets and in many other places but why did they ignore them so long. How fairly can their minds be decorated (enlightened) unless they develop empathy for the ‘others’? The students pay attention to these people only when these people are made engaged into the educational programme which the students are bound to respect. The minds of the students are so constrained that even if something like the issues of transgender introduced for the first time in academics can immediately change their mindset because the students always remain loyal to academics.

Hijras of India have always been categorized as ‘other’ for their alternative sexual identity. They could hardly eradicate the hatred that you bear for them. But you cannot be fully blamed for your intolerance towards them because your mind is programmed to respond differently to the people of different ranks, classes and identities. The first notable research on hijras was made by Serena Nanda and her research was partially aided by a grant from University of New York PSC-CUNY Research Award Programme in 1985, 1986, and 1989. Serena was born and brought up in US; her first encounter with the hijras was in 1971 while walking with an Indian friend on a main street of Bombay. She found that two people in female clothing stood in front of them blocking their way. They clapped their hands in a particular manner and then spread out their hands as a request for alms. Her friend hurriedly gave them a few Pennines and then dragged her along at quick pace. Serena asked her friend who these people were and why did she react so strongly at their presence. Her friend just nodded her head and without replying

she changed the subject. Serena sensed her discomfort and let the matter go but she later discussed the incident with other Indian friends. She learned a little about the hijras from them and also realized the fact that their lives “appeared shrouded in great secrecy and around whom there appeared to be a conspiracy of silence”. Indeed, Serena also maintained the secrecy in her book by using pseudonyms for all the individuals and places except only the major cities of India. She expresses “ In this book, I hope to send "through the thickets of our separateness " the very human voice s of individuals who seem, at first glance, very different from most people, exotic, perhaps even bizarre, but who share in our common humanity.” From her previous visits to India she knew that most of the Indians are middle class and they are acquainted with the hijras only through their public rituals that is performances on auspicious rituals in marriage and child birth. Only few male acquaintances informed her that hijras works as male prostitute. Besides this little information, she could not know anything about them. Then she decides to meet the hijras because without meeting them she could not “distinguish fact from fiction, myth from reality”. In 1981, having a sabbatical leave from her university, Serena came to live in Bastipur located in Bombay, a place where a large number of hijras live. She later came to be in a long term relationship with her research subjects. Indeed, she visited India several times to meet the hijras whom with she developed mental bonding. She expresses “We develop attachments that are a very important part of not only our fieldwork, but also of our lives. These attachments are subject to the same vulnerabilities of loss that characterize our most important relationships at home.” Serena sets an example about how adventurous one’s mind should be and how independently one can feed one’s mind to be truly decorated.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak founded the Pares Chandra and Sivani Chakravorty Memorial Literacy Project, which operates some rural schools in West Bengal. These schools are founded in dirt-poor villages where most of the people belong to lower castes. Though, Spivak teaches in Columbia University on doctorate level, a rich private university of US, she

never forgets to work with the people of her country especially who are subaltern, marginalized and who have no access to mobility. She never fears to take challenge of upgrading their lives; she visits her schools several times in a year and teaches the underprivileged students with utmost care. She does not bother to live there without regular amenities and even with no flushing toilets. Being invited by The Akademie der Verlernens, she gave a lecture at Vienna City Hall where she expresses how she could become intimate with the people of the villages. Before even trying to exercise her altruistic act she tells them “I am your enemy because I was born a caste Hindu. I do not believe in anything, not did my parents. I am good. My parents were fantastic...But two generations do not undo thousands of years of denying you the right to intellectual labour.” Her honest confession actually reflects her deep insight of increasing involvement with the lower caste/class people for their social inclusion. She suggests learning from everyone irrespective of class, caste and also asks “to learn how to work with mind machine that have been destroyed by your own ancestors.” So, you have to rearrange your mind by keeping yourself away from the mental attitude that they (the ‘others’) are not as good as you are. Spivak is against class-parted education and she thinks real academy is in great trouble. So, at the end of the lecture she wishes, “Let the academy be what the first academy was which is to say walking about. There is a walk about... They walked as they learnt. I think it would be a great idea to move around and not have wonderful rooms (she indicated the city hall) and corporate existence.” Serena and Spivak actually show you how to decorate minds from real life experiences. Both of them work in US universities, but they constantly collect information from the people who are disenfranchised, marginalized and even unidentified. They decorate their minds as best as possible by continuous searching of lives that seem unrevealed. Hence, you should train your mind in a way that you can learn from anyone irrespective of class, caste, gender, race, location as to have your minds truly decorated.

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Mother Loving and the Theatrics of Patriarchy

Divya Somani

Before I embarked upon my liberal arts education, an article was no more than a source of information, something to corroborate with a variety of other bits of pre-existing information. Fast forward through one year and my own response to the process of reading is a fascinating revelation. I find myself being able to trace a certain genealogy of ideas and place them in the context of a larger narrative. One of the prime skills I am coming to acquire is the development of a comprehensive framework within which ideas can flow innovatively. With the aspiration of applying these skills, this essay will attempt to put into conversation ideas of divinity, feminine power and the theatricality of gender using ‘Venus and Adonis’, ‘Dohri Zindagi’ and an article titled ‘The women of Karni Sena And Their Rage Against “Padmaavat”’. Implicit within all these works are ideas which I previously never had the conceptual framework to grasp. The essay will display a two-pronged approach in terms of structure, wherein the article will act as a pivot and the two pieces will broadly deal with the why and how of the article’s contents.

Whilst the popular trope used to describe the source of certain normatively disturbing behaviours is ‘daddy issues’, I would like to propose that in the Indian context, the mother, in particular a divine one, wins on that front. There are few other figures that are more glorified and eulogised by film, literature and media than that of the self-sacrificial, persevering mother whose qualities are sized up to divine proportions. From Mehboob Khan’s classic ‘Mother India’ to the more recent ‘Mom’ starring the late Sridevi, there lies something in the figure of a mother that for us Indians is almost out of reach of the human, which is to say something

which is ideal, infallible and consequently in many regional narratives, divine. The comparison of female politicians to mother figures is commonplace. Indira Gandhi, for example, was revered by many as a manifestation of *shakti*. This computation of feminine power is solely derived from the successful execution of two roles – that of an ideal wife, and even more so that of an ideal mother. A chimeric problem is bound to arise when feminine power is fit to suit only a certain kind of prescriptive narrative. In the article ‘Padmaavat,’ Manjushree Shaktavat states that ever since she took up protesting she has become the ‘busiest person in the family’ (Bordia). If one attempts to rephrase that statement in order to make the meaning more explicit it would perhaps sound something along the lines of ‘I am now undertaking as much work as any man in my family’. The implicit indication reasons that the only other way a woman can be powerful is by being a man. To put it simply, a woman who is not a mother or a wife is powerful in masculinity never in femininity.

One of the comments on the article by an inhabitant of Udaipur states that conventionally they referred to Padmavati as ‘Rani Padmini’ but after Bhansali’s film they call her ‘Ma Padmavati’ (Bordia). One is forced to question why the qualities of a mother are bestowed upon a mythical queen who has seemingly little to do with motherhood. The answer lies in the boldly complacent reasoning that the figure of a mother lies above and beyond any sexual desire. A mother has to necessarily be pure, self-sacrificing and above the reach of basal desires. Making Rani Padmini into ‘Ma Padmavati’ veils her from the male gaze in a manner which the *ghungat* never can. Furthermore, it catapults her into the most powerful female figure that the Indian imagination can conjure. In the fabric of Indian literature and mythology all female goddesses are automatically assigned the prefix of Ma in order to desexualise them. Needless to say, that the same reasoning does not apply to their male counterparts. To protect her from the slander that the Rajputs believe she’s being subjected to, Padmavati is deified and mothered. The principle problem in the manner in which the mother figure is made divine lies

in the complete lack of space given to her to err in any manner. Such expectations fail to account for the fact that women are also human beings who err and who have desires beyond their maternity or I daresay, conceive of their maternal duties in a way different from the norm. The biggest irony lies in the fact that Padmavati is most definitively sexualised by none other than the Rajputs themselves. By investing so much effort to protect her from sexualisation and debasement, the Rajputs highlight that there is something decidedly sexual about her which needs to be silenced and covered. The dichotomy lies in the fact that a woman is so sexualised that she has to necessarily be placed above and beyond the body in itself to be dissociated from desire and objectification. The act of Jauhar reflects the sexualisation of the female form. If women were simply concerned with saving themselves the horror of rape and ravage any other means of death would have sufficed. The act of Jauhar, however, rids them of a body altogether such that no man could set eyes on their form or mutilate them post mortem. This behaviour plays into the normative view wherein a woman's physicality is never thought of devoid of sexualising her body.

There is perhaps no one who has explored questions about the gender roles more creatively and sensitively than Shakespeare. If one reads 'Venus and Adonis' versus 'Padmaavat', the literary role played by Venus is one of the established and active character who takes the narrative forward whilst the role of Padmavati is more symbolic than character oriented. In Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis, Venus's divinity is not removed from her sexuality and sexual agency. If Padmavati is given a divine stature because of her desexualisation, Venus as a goddess of love is divine in her sexuality. Her role as the pursuing lover, overtly expressing her desires is traditionally characteristic of the male character. Even though Venus is executing a traditionally masculine role, she is masculine only in her forwardness. Shakespeare raises a provocative 'what if' of gender roles by not only switching gender roles but in a certain sense transforming them altogether to give birth to a new kind of

femininity. C.S Lewis is incredibly uncomfortable with how ‘soft and plump’ Venus is, not because she is masculine but because she doesn’t fit his ideal of femininity. Patriarchy is threatened by the kind of feminine autonomy displayed by Venus simply because of how earthy, sensual and utterly real she is in comparison to the tall ideals of divine purity which oppress ordinary women on a daily basis. The deification of Padmavati and of the mother figure in general is not an exaltation but dehumanisation. Venus provides a prime example of an alternative module of feminine authority and power, one which celebrates human traits and desires freely rather than suppressing them.

The manner in which homosexual desire is approached in the Padmaavat article is interesting because it uses the process of negation. A young student of Chittor claimed that even the maids of Queen Padmini had not seen any part of her body save for her ankles (Bordia). Manjushree Shaktavat claims in clear terms that Rajput women danced only in the presence of women and that too in full *ghungat* (Bordia). Most significantly, a keynote point of discomfort for the Rajput community arises from the song “Ghoomar” wherein Deepika Padukone’s legs become visible. Not only do these instances posit questions about what kind of framework the Rajputs have for homosexual desire but it goes one step further by making the body of the queen an object to be revered through ignorance. This statement plays into the trend in Indian mythological narratives wherein no one sets their eyes on a woman who is in a position of great reverence, mostly because she is either another man’s wife or the desexualised mother. A classic example would be that of Lakshman and Sita wherein the stories claim that even after fourteen years Lakshman was unaware about Sita’s features because he never looked onto her face whilst speaking to her.

An interesting dimension of the protests voiced by the women of the Jauhar Kshatrani Manch lies not only in the object of the protest but also in the manner in which the protest was executed. Rajasthan was and continues to be a deeply conservative state wherein institutions

like caste and gender have a deep-rooted influence. The institutional oppression of caste and gender find a performative expression at the level of the individual. Power becomes tangible and palpable through tapping into the theatricality of clothing and demonstrations. The theatricality of institutional oppression is made glaringly evident in the act of protesting. Since women are expected to dress a certain way, direct correlation implies that their protests too will be of a certain nature, distinctly different from that of their male counterparts. After all, these women protested not just as offended members of the Rajput communities but as *kshatranis* (female warriors). The binary along which the roles of men and women are distributed demarcates the public as the sphere of the man and the private as the sphere of the woman. In such a context it is interesting to note the manner in which a protest, which belongs to the sphere of the public, takes on a feminine character. Since masculinity lies in the domain of the status quo, possessing masculine qualities becomes a source of pride. The pattern followed by institutional oppression, be it that of caste, class, gender or race, always sets the qualities of the powerful as the ideal. The institution of racism has a clear-cut place it gives to a black man in a white world. However, as whiteness is the ideal the black man would still aspire to gain the qualities of a white man in order to move closer to the status quo. Similarly, the institution of patriarchy has a rigid space which it gives to a woman inhabiting a man's world but since masculinity is the status quo, a woman is aspiring to be a man just to be more powerful.

The protestors display an acute awareness as far as the power of drama is concerned. Whilst being photographed the women of the Jauhar Kshatrani Manch are conscious of the fact that they had to look like *kshatranis* and hence hold the sword in their hands. They even dress in the totality of their bridal finery which is an outfit reserved for festivals and weddings donning *lehengas*, *odhnis*, *rakhris*, *bajubands* and *hathphools*. If these women were attempting to look powerful, they don garments which are characteristic of a successful marriage indicating the fact that they were successful in the most significant endeavour of their lives.

The 'visual drama' (Bordia) of their get up and their declaration of committing Jauhar got them into national headlines. Theatrics is of utmost importance in the exercise of any power structure. The analogy of theatrics holds true for the institution of gender. Gender is highly political and contentious because it is performative. Gender is not performative because it is political rather it becomes political because it is performative. If one's gender and more importantly the perception of one's gender were steeped in biology such contention would not arise. The question of possessing 'manhood' or 'womanhood' where it really 'counts' (Detha 146) would not even arise because biology is more permanent and beyond the reach of alteration in comparison to performance. Gender is contentious because the theatricality of it grants it a flexibility wherein one can be a man or a woman, or none, in many ways. Such mobility threatens hierarchical distribution of power.

'Dohri Zindagi' demonstrates a fabulous example of the performative role in gender identification. Not only does it depict gender as a performative role, but it also complicates the issue of whether or not biological gender gives birth to innate tendencies. The question of where one derives their masculinity or femininity is complicated using, say, the moustache as the prime example of manliness. Beeja is confident in her role as a man because she has an angarkhi and a turban which is sixteen hands long. Her behaviour remains largely unchanged until she is biologically transformed into a man by the spirit chief after which she seems to be gripped by lust and possession. The issue of gender identity is, however, pertinent throughout the text because it never provides any clear answer regarding what constitutes gender. This text throws light on why cross dressing makes people so uncomfortable. Cross dressing taps into the fluid performative space of gender which threatens social reproduction. The principal reason why the men of the village are threatened by Beeja and Teeja's love is because the hierarchical power structure working in their favour was preserved through the social reproduction of norms

and customs. If Beeja and Teeja use performance to make a mockery of patriarchal norms and toxic masculinity the women from the Kshatrani manch use the same to do the exact opposite.

Power, much like sexuality, is not something which is removed from us but housed within the bounds of the body. Sexual freedom is as important and as threatening as intellectual freedom. The reason why intellectual discourse is shut down in authoritarian regimes is not different from the reason why people in certain hierarchical power structures are not permitted to have sexual relations. Power is housed as much in the body as it is in our words and minds. Most importantly both power and sexuality are borne of fluidity and change. Sexuality is threatening to hierarchy because it fundamentally alters where and how power is housed. In conclusion, for better or for worse, I do not think I have the capability to read anything without intellectualising it anymore.

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About the Author(s)

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Con Chapman

The Ophelia of Deep River

Ophelia, made mad by the murder of her father,
Took to singing snatches of song; before long she
Was weaving garlands of flowers and weeds, climbing
A willow along a river in Elsinore to hang them there.

Among the flowers were long purples, orchis mascula,
Also known as dead men's fingers, or among the vulgar,
something far grosser; a too-strong attraction to a
father, perhaps, was reflected in that choice.

You went down to the water with a purpose, unlike
Ophelia, who fell into the water when a branch broke.
She floated, unaware of her peril, her clothes holding
Her up as she sang, suspended, until at last she sank.

I think you heard overtones of your own as alone,
You wandered the banks of Deep River; a father who made
Piano keys, whom you loved too much and blamed
at the same time, since he was taken from you not by

death, but by his own choosing.
Where Ophelia fell, you leapt.

The River Where His Lover Lies

The river where his lover lies
is not too wide from bank to bank.
The water eddies here and there
as it flows down into the sea.

The ferry carries cars across
from Chester on one shore to Lyme.
The surface of the water's calm,
there's not a lot they have to say.

He took the boat so they could see
the swans that swim along in pairs.
They mate for life, he'd said; the plank
was lowered, so were her eyes.

Something was amiss that day,
some inner peace, some needed balm.
He calculated there was time
to stem the tide, avert the loss.

The water made her paleness stark
against her hair, as she sank down;
and now he has to damn or thank
the river where his lover lies.

Were Your Pockets Full of Stones?

I suppose I know now why
you chose the river, reading
that Virginia Woolf put stones
in her pockets to sink herself down.
She was for you a perplexing guide,
she with fierce pride
in her womanhood who
drowned herself rather than
spoil her husband's life.
At the end she heard voices
that kept her from working,
from even writing a
suicide note properly.
You too wandered off alone
and I wonder, as you
reached the water's edge,
were your pockets full of stones?

About the Poet

Con Chapman is a Boston poet whose work has appeared in *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Light*, *Spitball* and other general circulation and literary magazines. He is currently writing a biography of Johnny Hodges, Duke Ellington's long-time alto sax, for Oxford University Press.

Moinak Dutta

Purely Academic

Let's now become purely academic

Our goals lined by books,

You should cite Virginia Woolf

And I, just William Blake,

You would say something about theories

Like how fancy differed from imagination,

And how imagination kept Coleridge

Apart in two distinct parts,

I would try not to be traditional

So would I quote from Eliot,

You would challenge me

With an wasted land

Before I would take you

To the mariners,

From there we would both change places

You would take the right hand side of the window

And I would sit on the left,

And both of us would occasionally look at

The outside world

Out of our bookish pursuits.

The Girl with Never-Ending Secrets

'My first husband got a son
I never met him
Saw him on photos
And thought he was dream'
That's how she narrated her life
So horrid and filled with pathos
She had been several times wived
And still she found her course,
I thought I was just like Manto
Giving in to her dismal state
But how could I not feel her woe
Which she had it by her fate;

Then came a day deep and long
I saw how earth smiled like a child
I thought then I wrote a song,
An ode to the summer mild,

I gave that to her, out of grief
Knowing that she could it bear
Like a yellow disillusioned leaf,
But she not for that had care,

She tore it and flung across
The day as it went away
I knew she would take a pause
Before she would next time pray.

That Fruit Juice Seller at Kufri

A meandering road lied upfront
Like a virgin spreading her charms,
The warmth of the day brought smell of
Cherries, apples and a lot of candy floss;

Hiking a few kilometres when thought to rest
The vendor selling juice appeared
I must have been thirsty
For took only few minutes
To empty the steel tumbler,
' want another?'

The vendor asked, business like his tone,
' yes, one more please'
I had been the most agreeable thing,
Docile, modest, too gentlemanly,

He smiled,
An all knowing smile,
' Kufri leaves no one thirsty'
He said.
I agreed not to disagree.

About the Poet

Moinak Dutta has been writing poems and stories from school days. Many of his poems and stories were published in national and international anthologies and magazines and also dailies including 'The Statesman' (Kolkata edition), 'World Peace Poetry Anthology' (United Nations), and some others. His first full length English (romance) fiction “**Online@Offline**” *was* published in 2014, by Lifi Publications. His second fiction '**In search of la radice**' was published in 2017 by Xpress Publications. Presently working on his third literary fiction. He may be contacted at moinakdutta@yahoo.co.in.

Lynn White

Listen

Listen.

Listen,

can you hear them?

The sounds that went before
the wall was built.

Listen,

I can hear them.

Not the wall builders,

no, not them,

but others who also

don't want to see

what lies beyond.

What lies on the other side.

Others who will build walls

in the future.

But listen,

we can hear them.

Listen.

Listen for when the cracks appear,
then push.

Closed

It was a beautiful village,
the sun was shining,
the mountain air pure,
a perfect place for a coffee.
We could see two cafes,
but the first we tried was closed,
closed for a while by the looks.
The second looked hopeful
with tables and chairs outside
but the door was locked.
An elderly man came over and explained.
that it only opened at weekends.
The other had closed because
the people had left the village.
They all want to live in the town,
he told us
and now the houses are empty
and there are just a few tourists
who come at weekends to drink a coffee
or a beer.
He told us to sit at a table
and went into a house
across the street
and returned with a tray
and three good French coffees
made in his own kitchen.
So we sat in the sunshine

breathing in the pure mountain air,
a perfect place for a coffee
with our new friend.

Such Nonsense

We had a new teacher,
a student still in college.
He read us a long poem.
I listened carefully trying
to make sense of it.
It was funny.
Was it meant to be funny?
or was the laughter of derision,
to what sounded like nonsense.
Laughter seemed allowed
and that was unusual.
School was not a place for fun.
Well, maybe it was nonsense
but I loved the imagery
and the colours of the words.
I asked if 'pea green' was
the colour of mushy peas
from the chip shop,

or was it those in pods
fresh from the garden.
Nothing was clear,
but it was fun.

About the Poet

Lynn White lives in north Wales. Her work is influenced by issues of social justice and events, places and people she has known or imagined. She is especially interested in exploring the boundaries of dream, fantasy and reality. Her poem 'A Rose For Gaza' was shortlisted for the Theatre Cloud 'War Poetry for Today' competition. This and many other poems, have been widely published in anthologies and journals such as Vagabond Press, Apogee, Firewords, Indie Soleil, Light Journal and Snapdragon. Find Lynn <https://lynnwhitepoetry.blogspot.com>

Kavita Shastri

A Trail

How trivial is life:

A few decades

Summed up in a page.

A million memories;

Fade and vanish:

In a jiffy.

Time flies past, leaving a trail,

Lost battles, lone victories,

Plans shelved, schedules revoked

Pride vanquished, egos crushed,

Ready to depart:

To be consumed

Panchabhuta.....

Money, Honey

Money, Money

Means to an end,

Or an end to means,

Dear or Dearth,

Paper to paperless;

Tired, travelling

Exchanging hands:
Stacked, tracked...
Now awaits coffers
To get back ...
To get burnt,
Destroyed, buried ...
Everywhere to Nowhere,
Everything to Nothing....
Money, Money ...more, more to no more.

A Search

I walked a while
I paused, peered around
Found myself
Dazed, lost
Who am I?
What I seek?
Multitude of queries...
Unanswered,
I await a reply:
In Time,
Off Time.

About the Poet

Dr. Kavita Shastri is serving as Associate Professor and Head, Department of English and Media Studies at Vijaya College, Jayanagar, Bangalore. She has been teaching both at the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Level. She has presented Papers and Chaired sessions at several National and International Seminars, Conferences and Workshops. Several of her Papers have been published too. She has guided students for both M.Phil. and Ph.D. Programs. She is a budding Poet and Translator. Some of her Poems have appeared in E-Journals.

Archisman Banerjee

Dip To Insanity

The day when we hunted
Pondered on the forbidden
Taking steps to the darker zone
Remains meant to be hidden

The day when he was locked
His cold and impenetrable lunacy
Slaughtered millions of minds
Figuring out aesthetic supremacy

The night when she came
Dipping the 'you' in darkness
Hey, are you burned and broken?
Come heal it up with regress

While the day and night gets past soon
Let's stare tonight into the lady moon.

Nemesis

My life all alike
A subtle euphoria

After trying to find
To find the very best
Harsh reality one day
Made me blind

Is when I decided
To take some rest
Every year gets shorter
And lies a thousand misconceptions
uncalculated....

To find that working class hero
On a piece of ground in home town
Further I'll travel miles
Paddle the endless cycle
Of this enigmatic life

And then someday
Closer to death,
Cold and tired
The song is over
The time is gone.

While You Light Shiva up

It pains here when I try to escape
Or maybe it bled inside

Erothanatos

Or when I try to swim across
Is when I get knocked down by tide

Sitting dead in my room
Overweighed by thoughts
All I blabber is sheer bullshit
All I need is a couple of shots

Night, deep and dark as always
Turns darker when you light the bob
Deepest fears are hunted at night
The world all along seems to sob

Walking through this endless path
Or monotonous according to you
Rather I find it witty
Cause you never can see it through

While Shiva hits through his holly Chillum
While the world fucks us hard
While you hit me with your coyness
While I light the green stuff up
The leaf is all
That brings regress

About the Poet

Archisman Banerjee is an undergraduate student at Department of English, City College, Kolkata.

Arthita Mandal

Beggars

Dear, What are you doing now?
Look at me, look at your hot coffee
Your dearest coffee is dry out.
What can I do?
My sweet home is now hard and crude.
I am so hungry and wear away slowly.
Please remember,
when I were your black coffee,
loved me too much.
Today, everything is black
We, two blind beggars are begging blood.

The Crow

I returned from a fairy mount
One angel kissed me.
At present, some smell is coming
And flowers bloom in last train.
I want to see mountain again and again,
I want to return kiss
But The train ruined away.

Now a crow is flying and everything is meaningless.

About the Poet

ARTHITA MANDAL, teaching in Subarnarekha Mahavidyalay, Pashchim Medinipur, is the Editor-in-chief of a UGC recognised Bengali journal, Kingshuk. She writes poetry, short stories, essays etc. Baishadik, Tomay Uriye Dilam Katha, Jyanto Bhooter Goppo, Ichchepatar Deshe are some of her famous collections. She is pursuing PhD under Vidyasagar University. She may be contacted at arthita.mandal@gmail.com.

Ginnie Singh

The Abnormal

To the pieces that never blamed the wall for scattering them,
But reflect its audacity silently.

To the pieces that never showed the desire to be assembled again,
And found peace in bin.

Dry is the eye, wounded is the soul
Let me now, Oh! Let me live alone.

Prostitutes

I am like an open book,
Attempted by many,
Understood by none.

Love—That Was Told

Come again and make me wet
With your words of love,
Their healing power will help survive my suffering soul,
I lost my paradise, somewhere, in the garden of fear
“For love is a curse”, to me ‘twas told.

I heard it and believed it, and yes
You proved me wrong!
Stepped forward to feel it,
But you were already gone;
How can now I lock it up in me
and there forever hold,
“For love cannot be kept hidden”, to me ‘twas told.

Your love was a mirage— trapped my sight, wounded my soul.
I tried to quench my thirst wit it but ,
it turned out a giant black hole.
Indeed got betrayed but expected it not from you —
yes
“Love is an illusion”, to me ‘twas told.

About the Poet

Ginnie Singh is a reviewer and independent researcher hailing from Dhanbad, Jharkhand. She has done her M.A in Literature and currently pursuing Ph.D. She may be contacted at ginniesingh23@gmail.com.